COFFEE *and* *a* LOVE AFFAIR

AN AMERICAN GIRL'S ROMANCE ON A COFFEE PLANTATION

BY

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To
MY BROTHER

Coffee and a Love Affair

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El Cafetal, Sierra Nevada Mountains.

June 14th.

I HAVE been here two weeks. I am alive. I am well, and I like it.

What an experiment it was, though, — my coming! If I had ever, for one moment, thought of myself as an angel, this action on my part would have opened my eyes to the fact that in reality I must be nothing else than a fool. There can be no doubt whatever that this is a case in which angels would have feared to tread; while I — I rushed in as fast as the mule could carry me.

I was in Santa Marta, waiting for the banana boat to come in, that I might take passage on it, and return to what the foreigners here call "God's country." For a year and a half I had been in Colombia,

up in Bogota. I had come down again to the coast with every intention of returning to civilization by the first steamer. I suppose any sane person would have done so, but on the subject of travel I always acknowledge, quite frankly, that I am not sane. I wonder if any other girl in the world ever refused to marry a man simply because she preferred to go to Europe. Two years ago, in New York, I told Kent Winthrop that I would rather go to Europe than marry any man in the world. He replied that he would rather have me go to Europe than marry any man in the world except him. But when I put the emphasis differently, and told him that I would rather go to Europe than marry *any* man, he said — rather crisply, I remember — that if I preferred Europe to him, to take Europe by all means. I took Europe. There I met the Caravallos; went with them to Bogota; returned to the coast expecting to go home; fell in love with Coffee, and came up here to the Sierra Nevadas. Well and truly does Kipling say that the "go fever" is more real than many doctors' diseases!

The day that I arrived in Santa Marta I

met one of the five American men of the town. The mere fact that I had arrived — that I was there — I, a lone woman, unmarried, and without grey hairs,— was in itself singular enough to make it perfectly reasonable, almost inevitable, that this one-fifth of the American male colony should put to me the question that he did. I forget how he phrased it; — in some words that placed it in the light of a fellow-countryman's friendly interest — but the gist of the interrogation was:

"What in the world are *you* doing *here?*"

I answered him that I was doing nothing; that is, that I had no business reason for being there. I had come, I said, for pleasure.

"Pleasure?" he repeated, incredulously. "Good Lord! *Pleasure!*"

If I had been there for anything else, I think this blanket would have been a very damp one indeed; but as I really had come simply because it had pleased me to do so; and as I knew that if I so wished I could leave by the next Tuesday's banana boat; and as, moreover and above all, I was sincerely and honestly enjoying myself at that

moment, Mr. Anson's words frightened me no more than does a thunder storm in a play. The house is very dark, certainly, and so much noise and such lightning effects ought to be terrifying; yet really I am having a beautiful time, and would not for worlds be defrauded of one of the creepy chills that go running down my back.

It was even that same first day, I think, that saw the beginning of my interest in Coffee. I knew, of course, before I came to Santa Marta, that this was a coffee region, and that up in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, hereabouts, were *cafetales* — coffee plantations. But I did not realize what the atmosphere of a coffee region is until I found myself in one. It means coffee and coffee and coffee. Coffee lands — past, present and future; — coffee trees, with and without shade; the picking of coffee, the drying of coffee, the prices of coffee; — until one feels that to go back to North America without having experienced a coffee plantation would be to give over the remainder of one's life to one, long, unavailing regret. Almost without exception everyone that I met was directly interested in coffee. Either he owned a plan-

tation, or was manager of one, or was going to live on one to learn the business, or was looking for land on which to make one, or was getting up a company to capitalize one; — in one way or another, it was sure to be coffee. Of course there is the United Fruit Company, and that is not coffee; — it is bananas, and it is a great power in the land. Perhaps another person, going to Santa Marta, would find the world all bananas; but for me, from the very first, it was Coffee.

As I say, this enthusiasm came upon me at once, upon my arrival, and yet there seemed to be no way in which I could get any nearer to Coffee than I then was — perhaps fifteen miles from the nearest *hacienda* (plantation). There are no hotels in the mountains — only the homes of the planters and their families — and I had no excuse whatever for intruding myself upon any of them. I was not a capitalist, nor a prospector, nor a young man seeking an opportunity to learn to be a planter. I was only a woman. Why should Coffee take any interest in me? And yet,— where there's a woman there is usually a way .

On Sunday afternoon, the United States

consul invited some of us to go about three miles out of Santa Marta to see some old Indian graves; also to visit the house in which Bolivar died. El Señor Consul drove me in his little one horse shay, while the others rode on mules or horseback. As usual the conversation turned upon coffee, and I said that I had never in my life wished for anything as much as I now wanted to go to a coffee plantation and experience the life there.

"Would you go as governess?" inquired El Señor Consul, carelessly. He had no idea that I was in earnest.

"Go as governess!" I simply jumped at the idea. Go as governess! ! — My affirmation came with such force and swiftness that El Señor Consul was quite taken aback.

"You wouldn't like it at all," he assured me, hastily, seeming to feel that if I did go, now, he would be in some way responsible for me and my well-being.

"Shouldn't like it? I should love it," I told him. "*Why* shouldn't I like it?"

"You live in New York?" he said.

"Yes; but I like to see new places."

"Have you ever been for any length of time entirely away from civilization?"

"I have spent a summer in the Adirondacks."

El Señor Consul smiled.

"Do you mean in the woods?" he asked.

"N-o; not exactly. We were just across the lake from the Prospect House. We used to go over to the dances, and to bowl, in the morning."

"Exactly. Now if you went up to El Cafetal, you would simply be buried alive. The Martins are nice people — the very nicest — but they live in a four-room, mud house, with a palm-thatched roof. The windows are simply openings in the walls, with no glass in them. There are no doors between the rooms — just curtains. The last time I was up there, the outside door would not shut within several inches — the dampness had warped it. In the rainy season, which is just now beginning, and will continue until next December, everything is drenched for eighteen hours out of every twenty-four. The fog comes rolling into the house so thick that you can almost mould it up, like snow balls. When it is not raining you can go out, but there is nowhere to go. The house is on the side of a steep

mountain; you cannot climb up because directly back of the house begins an almost impenetrable forest. If you go in the other direction, you — well, if you missed your footing and began to roll, you would be back in Santa Marta before you could stop yourself. The Martins are delightful people, as I have said, but they are perfect strangers to you. Would you not be a little forlorn with them, alone? The nearest neighbors are at least three miles away."

He paused.

"At last!" I said to myself. For, all the time that he had been talking, I, though I had listened to him, had been carrying on a train of thought of my own.

"How many children are there?" I wanted to know.

"Children! Oh, six; but one of them is in Barranquilla, at school."

"Are the other five old enough to have lessons?"

"No; only three of them. Look here; you don't really mean it, do you? Why, you never heard of them until half an hour ago. Aren't you at least going to think it over?"

"Señor Consul," I said, "a year ago last August I was in Switzerland. I had gone to Europe with the idea of living as governess in some French or German family, to learn French or German while I taught English. In Switzerland I met the Caravallos —a family from Bogota. I had never seen or heard of them before, and as for the place they came from, I knew so little of it that when one of them told me that his home was Colombia,— *British* Columbia was the only country of that name that occurred to me. When he explained that it was Colombia, South America, I went to my room and looked in an atlas to find out whether Colombia was north or south of Rio Janeiro. Only three out of the eight Caravallos knew a word of English, and, until then, I had never even heard the Spanish language spoken. When I had known these people four weeks, they asked me if I would return with them to Bogota, as governess for the one daughter, a girl of fifteen. It was about five o'clock in the afternoon when they suggested the plan to me, and when we went in to dinner, everything had been arranged. The next day I went to Geneva and secured my passage on

the same steamer that the Caravallos were sailing on. I went with them to Bogota, remained with them a year and a half, and I was so far from regretting it that now I am ready —"

"To do it all over again at El Cafetal," interrupted El Señor Consul.

"Yes," I said, positively; "to go to El Cafetal — if they will have me."

Of course there was that side to be considered. I,— being, as I have explained, not an angel, but the other thing,— might be willing to go to an unknown family, in a mud house, in the woods, twenty miles from Santa Marta, which was two thousand miles from home. But to those people *I* was the unknown quantity, not they, and who could tell if they would care to take their chances with me? As Elizabeth says of her governess, "I am afraid she despises us because she thinks we are foreigners — We, on the other hand, regard *her* as a foreigner, which, of course, makes things very complicated."

On that point, however, El Señor Consul, quite properly — else why is he consul? — offered to arbitrate, or mediate, or intervene, or whatever it is that consuls do to get their

countrymen out of difficulties (only in this case it was a countrywoman, and into difficulties instead of out of them), and said that the next time that Mr. Martin "came down," he would try to arrange matters for me.

"You speak," I said, "as if Mr. Martin were the angel Gabriel, about to descend from Paradise. How does he come down, and what for?"

"Wait until you go up to El Cafetal, and you will know," was the only answer that I received. I have come up, and I do, indeed, understand all about it.

Mr. Martin arrived in Santa Marta a day or two later, and went, of course, to the consulate. I was sent for in haste, ushered into the *sala* (sitting room), and introduced as the young woman who would like to go into the mountains as governess. Mr. Martin looked me over and said he would consult his wife on the subject and let me know. Mrs. Martin has since told me that she asked her husband what kind of looking person I was.

"How does she look?" he answered. "Oh, I don't know. I believe she is rather

neat-looking." To such an extent may a man be married.

Mrs. Martin must have felt that neatness was a desirable quality in a governess, for a few days later I received a note from her (brought down by Juana because they were afraid to send a man, lest he be seized for the revolution) in which she said that they would be glad to have me; that Mr. Martin would be down on Monday, and I could return with him. She added that they were building a new house which would have plenty of rooms in it; it would be finished in three or four months; in the meantime, she hoped I would not mind sleeping with the children. I thought of El Señor Consul's reply to my question as to the number of little Martins, and I will admit that for the moment my heart failed me. Then I remembered Coffee, and sent back a note by Juana saying that I and my steamer trunk would be ready at the time appointed. I packed my other trunks, with pounds of camphor against the moths, and had all things taken to the house of the Señora Consul, who kindly offered to store them for me until such time as I should "come down" to go home. In

these days of revolution, the foreign consulates are of course the houses that are safest from loot; and there may be fighting in Santa Marta at any time. In the steamer trunk I packed such clothes as could be washed; on my big shade hat I put fresh muslin bows, and then I was ready. For weal or for woe, I was to spend the next six months in the wilderness.

We left Santa Marta at six o'clock in the morning. Mr. Martin had brought down a mule for me to ride, and another for my trunk, which was hung from a pack-saddle on one side of the mule, and balanced by an equal weight of cargo — rice, oil, flour — what ever happened to be going up to the *hacienda* — on the other side. There were other cargo mules, also, going up laden with articles for the store (every plantation has its own store, where the men and their families can buy what they need), and two *arrieros,* or muleteers, were driving the animals in front of them. It is twenty-one miles from Santa Marta to El Cafetal, and in that distance there is a rise of four thousand feet, so that the trail is a steep one; yet the natives — not the men, only, but the women and the

children — think nothing of going up and down on foot. The *arrieros* go most of the way on a sort of trot, and have no difficulty in keeping pace with the mules, even on level ground.

The sun was just up as Mr. Martin and I rode away from the hotel, but already it was very hot. For the first two hours, the way is over the plain which extends back from Santa Marta and the Bay for perhaps eight miles. The rainy season on the coast has only lately begun, following a dry season of four or five months, and the plain is burnt to a crisp. That part of the ride up is the least attractive. About eight o'clock we commenced to ascend, and from then on it was a constant climb. After a while the air began to feel fresher and cooler, and above two thousand feet we had beautiful views of Santa Marta, down below, with the Bay, and beyond that the Caribbean Sea, stretching out to the horizon. We passed several coffee plantations on our way up. El Cafetal is the farthest one from Santa Marta ; — that is, the farthest in this valley. There are other plantations in the next valley, and one of them, they say, is higher than we are.

I began to like Mr. Martin during that morning's ride, and before we reached the end of it, I was hoping that I should find Mrs. Martin half as nice as he was.

After it had been decided that I was to come up here (most persons would have done it before, instead of after, I suppose), I asked El Señor Consul: —

"What sort of man is Mr. Martin?"

"What sort?" answered El Señor Consul. "He is the manager of a coffee plantation."

"Of course," I returned, surprised. "That is what he does. I mean, what *is* he? What is he like?"

"He is like the only kind of man that can be a successful coffee planter," persisted El Señor Consul.

"You mean that he knows all about coffee?"

"No one in the world knows all about coffee. However, Mr. Martin knows as much as is possible, I believe. But that is by no means all that is necessary. A coffee manager must manage — that is very important indeed."

"Manage the plantation?"

"Manage the *mozos* — the working hands. Do you know how many men there are at El Cafetal?"

"No. How many?"

"About one hundred, more or less, I should think. Most of them have families. They live in *ranchos* — palm-thatched huts — scattered here and there over the *hacienda*. Now those *mozos* need a master who thoroughly understands them."

"Are they difficult to control?"

"'Control' isn't the word; at least, it isn't with a good manager. He comes to that only as a last resort."

"What does he do first?"

"Oh, he manipulates, he directs, he guides, he conducts, he regulates. As I said, he manages."

"Ah!" I responded, thoughtfully. My query, "What sort of man is Mr. Martin?" was being answered. I was beginning to know.

"But the *mozos* —?" I questioned further. "They are —?"

"'Half savage and half child,'" quoted El Señor Consul. "That just expresses it. They are as irresponsible and unreliable as

children, with the elemental passions and instincts of savages. It is impossible to deal with them as with reasonable beings, yet there is always the necessity for working out a reasonable plan of action with them and through them."

"And Mr. Martin does this?"

"Oh, yes; he does it. You will see. For one thing, they all realise that there is no part of the work which he himself does not know how to do, from planting the coffee to shoeing the mules."

About half past eleven — to return to the morning of my coming up here — as we were riding in a place where the valley opens out, and permits a long view to the left, Mr. Martin pointed with his whip to a white spot on the side of a mountain, about a mile and a half away.

"Do you see that?" he asked me.

"Yes," I said, "what is it?"

"It is the place you are going to," he answered, "That is the manager's house of El Cafetal."

So that was the four-roomed, palm-thatched, mud house, with apologies for

doors and windows, of which El Señor Consul had warned me. I strained my eyes to see it better, and, really as we drew near, I was reassured, for small as it certainly was, and queer, and alien-looking to United States eyes, it yet had an air of home and welcome about it. At the time I thought this might be on account of the roses; but now, a week later, I know that it is due to the house-lady — La Niña Eva.

We rode up to the corridor, and at once there appeared to be forty or fifty children running to greet us, all shouting with one voice, *"Ahi viene la teacher!" "Ahi viene la teacher!"* "Here comes the teacher! Here comes the teacher!" These resolved themselves, presently, into three children who were old enough to run and talk; one old enough to run and shout, and one two-months-old baby in her mother's arms.

I looked at Mrs. Martin, and Mrs. Martin looked at me — the while she put her arm around me and said something — I have no idea what, except that from that moment I felt that I was at home. I do not know, of course, what was the result in Mrs. Martin's

mind of her scrutiny of the new governess; but as for me and *my* mind — we were absolutely and perfectly satisfied.

The required characteristics of a frontiersman's wife are the same the world over, I fancy. Some women take the hard life well and cheerfully, and some grumble and make the worst of it. But the life is there and it must be lived, and I hope that if ever I had to live it, I should do it as Mrs. Martin does.

Though we have six house-servants, they are all so incompetent that Mrs. Martin has to be busy from morning to night. In the first place, she makes all of her own and the children's clothes; she bakes the bread, and she makes the butter when there is milk enough to churn. Though there is a woman in the kitchen whose sole business is to cook, it falls upon Mrs. Martin to make all the *dulces* — that is, the sweets, preserves, desserts, etc.— and any other dish that requires brains and nice handling. Occasionally there is a laundress who knows enough to starch the clothes, but usually there is none so gifted, and so Mrs. Martin has that to do. Besides all this, La Niña Eva raises all the

vegetables that come upon our table. She has a fine little garden, and she does all the planting, weeding and picking herself. I have had nothing like such good things to eat since I left New York. All of our beef is killed on the place (the killing is done Sunday mornings, at four o'clock, by the way of beginning the week well) and for the first time in eighteen months I am enjoying rare roasts and good American beef steaks. In Bogota, when they kill an animal, the next thing they do is to bleed it until the flesh is like to that nominated in Shylock's bond. Then they cook the meat over a slow fire until a nice, tender, juicy piece of leather would be a luxury by comparison. Then it is allowed to cool, is cut into slices and served on cold plates; and when one eats of it sparingly, the Colombians cry, "*Ave Maria! Que raro que no le gusta la carne!*"—"Hail Mary! How strange that you do not like meat!" As for fresh vegetables,—let a native have his rice cooked with lard, and his fried platanos, and he would not give a Thank you for all the market produce of New Jersey.

. . . . . .

I am writing in my room; — not mine and the children's, but all mine. Some people are said to be as good as their word: Mrs. Martin is very much better than hers.

On my arrival she made me welcome, as I have written. Then she said to me, "Won't you come into your room and take off your hat?"

I followed her, wondering if there would be a separate bed for me, or if the five children and I should all bunk in together. We passed through a room which looked as if it were used as a sitting-room, because there was a desk in it, and books and sewing were about; but which, at the same time, I saw must be the dining-room, for there was the dining table, set for breakfast. Mrs. Martin lifted a curtain (no doors between the rooms;— you told the truth, Señor Consul!), and there was another room, not large, but very neat looking — like me. In a corner was one bed — only one — and that a single-size canvas cot. Did the children sleep on the floor, then? Did they sleep in the bed, and was I to sleep on the floor? Were all six of us to sleep in that bed, just large enough for one? —

"This was the dining-room," Mrs. Martin's voice broke in upon my amazement; "but I thought it would be nicer for you to have a room alone; so we have had the dining table taken into the *sala,* and this arranged for you."

That night, as I was going to sleep in the little canvas cot, I heard strange, rustling noises over my head. There are no ceilings in the house — only the poles of the roof, thatched with palm leaves which on the inside are as dry as a bone. This roof does not fit very tightly on the side walls, so that under the eaves there are spaces through which the air passes freely.

"Ah," I said to myself, sleepily, "the wind is rustling the palm leaves. What a pretty thought! And how interesting!"

But in the middle of the night I was awakened by a soft thud on the outside of my blankets, as if some small — not *very* small — object had dropped onto the bed. It was as though a kitten had jumped from the floor, or fallen from the roof: yet I had seen no kittens. It was very curious; but I had been awake soon after four that morning; I had travelled twenty miles on a mule, and I was

tired and very sleepy, so I could not stay awake to wonder at anything.

About daylight — always very near to six o'clock in this latitude — I opened my eyes, remembered where I was, and glanced about me. Again I heard the rustling noises overhead, and I looked up to the roof. The palm leaves were moving — but not in the wind! The roof was simply alive with rats, running over the poles, and among the thatch, in all directions. This was my pretty thought! It was still interesting, certainly, but there are times when one would willingly remain uninterested, even to the point of boredom.

I dressed hastily and went out. My little room has three doors; — one communicating with the *sala,* and two opening on the corridor which runs all around the house. The sun was just rising, though it would not appear above the mountain back of us for two hours yet. If the view that I saw that morning, and have seen every morning since, were in Europe — Cook and Company would not be able to sell tickets fast enough to the tourists who would flock to see it. I stood on our front corridor, and, looking down the

whole length of the valley, I saw Santa Marta, twenty miles away, lying, in that early morning light, white and glittering, like a city in a dream. Santa Marta has the most beautiful situation that can be imagined — built on its wide curve of the Caribbean Sea, with the Sierra Nevada Mountains rising behind it. When I came to Colombia, I landed at Barranquilla; but I should like to come again, and sail straight past the Morro into Santa Marta Bay, either very early in the morning, or at sunset.

On my right, then, as I say, was the long vista of the valley, with Santa Marta lying at the foot, and beyond that, the sea. To the left,— range after range of mountains. Back of the house, the mountains and the forests; in front, far in the distance; the Magdalena River; and, nearer, the lagoons which we crossed when we came from Barranquilla. I remember that at five o'clock on the last morning of that trip from Barranquilla, a fellow-passenger came to the window of the little cabin in which we women had slept, and called to me to come on deck. "Do come out," he said, "the view is beautiful; — the Sierra Nevadas all pink; the moon,

and three stars of the Southern Cross!" I hurried out, and found that it was just getting light; that the sun was almost risen, while the moon had not yet set; and of the stars, only those three great ones of the Cross still remained in the sky. I had no idea, then, that I should ever be living in those Sierra Nevada Mountains, looking so lovely in the dawn of a tropic day.

By this time I am beginning to know the plantation and its life rather well.

As to the house, it is all that El Señor Consul told me, and more also, as he did not mention the rats. There are four rooms. One of them is occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Martin, the baby, Dollie, and the two-year-old boy, Willie. In another are the eldest girl, Carmelita, aged nine, Alva, seven, and Clara, five. These three are my pupils. The third room is the combined dining-room and *sala,* and the fourth is mine. As in all southern establishments, the kitchen, storerooms and servants' rooms are detached.

We certainly are perched on the side of a steep mountain, and it is a daily wonder that we do not all roll off the place. We go out, as we say, "to take a walk"; but what we

really do is to fall down four hundred feet and then climb up again. We do this almost every day, in order to visit "*la casa nueva*," —the new house — and watch the process of its construction. The whole interest of El Cafetal now centers around that *casa nueva*, (even Coffee is more or less in the background) and it is going to be the day of our lives when it is finished and we move into it.

We all get up at six o'clock, and at half past six we have *desayuno* — coffee, *dulce* (sweet) and bread and butter. By half past seven I have begun to teach, and lessons go on until twelve. Then Mr. Martin and his overseer, Don Pepe, a man half Italian and half Colombian, come in from their work, and we have "breakfast." In the afternoon my pupils and I climb up or down until we get caught in the rain; then we break off huge banana leaves, and under the very excellent shelter of these we scurry back to the house. I arrive panting for breath, and more or less wet, as I do not know how to manage my banana leaf; but the children are perfectly calm, dry and unconcerned. We are becoming very good friends, the children and I.

I think El Señor Consul exaggerated the

rainy season, though, to be sure, it is early days yet, and I have by no means lived through the worst of one. The mornings are brilliant with sunshine — tropical sunshine — and blue skies. About breakfast time — that is, remember, twelve o'clock — the clouds begin to gather, and the mist rolls up the valley until we cannot see the nearest *rancho,* only a stone's throw away. Then the rain falls heavily for several hours, but by five o'clock, or thereabouts, the sun is out again, and the sunsets are simply gorgeous.

At five in the afternoon the signal is given for the men to stop work. Someone — generally one of the children — strikes a stone against the blade of an old hoe that has been suspended from a tree; the sound reverberates like a Chinese gong, and can be heard a long distance. Then Mr. Martin and Don Pepe come home (Don Pepe, by the way, sleeps in the store) and about six we have our dinner. By the time the sun sets the air is chill, and as it often begins to rain in the evening and rains all night, there is a good deal of dampness in the house, though I have not yet moulded the fog into balls. We have an open fire in the *sala,* and though the

chimney smokes dreadfully, the blaze is cheerful and comfortable. Mr. Martin says the chimney of the new house is not going to smoke. *Ojala!* as the natives say; which, being freely translated, means, Dear me, I hope so!

Those who get up at six are apt to go to bed at nine, and so we do. Directly after dinner the children are put to bed. We Olympians talk for a short time about the new house, and all we mean to do therein, and then we, too, get under the blankets — two or three apiece, for the nights are cold.

June 16th.

We had a caller, yesterday. Even if we live in the woods, we do have callers. This was an Englishman, a neighbor of ours; — not a next-door neighbor, exactly, but one from an *hacienda* not more than eight or ten miles away. He rode up on his mule, dismounted at the corridor, and Mrs. Martin introduced him to me.

"Ah!" he said, when it was made known to him that I am an American; "Ah! I have never been in the States, but I have a friend who went over there last year."

"Indeed?" I said. Someway, I did not exactly like the tone.

"Yes. He was a peer, you know, but — er — not rich. He went over — er — he'd heard so much about American girls, don't you know."

"Yes?" I returned, politely, "Well?"

"Well, by Jove! he came back and said that all the nice girls he'd met were poor. Hard luck, wasn't it?"

"Why?" I asked, still politeful, like Mulvaney.

"Why, of course, he couldn't marry 'em, don't you know. He went over on purpose to —"

"To marry an heiress?"

"Of course. You know how you — how American girls jump at a title. He married one who had £200,000 in her own right, and would have more when her father died."

"But I thought that he told you —"

"That all the nice girls were poor. He did. That's why I say it was hard luck. The girl he married was awfully vulgar — must have been, don't you know, or she wouldn't have taken him for his title."

This was too much. I saw Mrs. Martin

pressing her lips together. The Englishman was her guest, but he was not mine.

"She must have been vulgar, because she married a man for his title," I repeated. "Well, if that is vulgarity, what words will you use to describe the character of a man who deliberately crosses the ocean to look for a girl with money enough to support him, and who, having found her, and made her his wife, returns home and says openly that all the *nice* girls that he met were poor?"

Here I looked at Mrs. Martin and saw that she was encouraging me with her eyes, so I went on,—

"It is doubtless vulgar, as it is certainly wrong, to marry for any reason except love. But, really, it seems to me that of the two ambitions, that of the girl who desires a title, with all that that implies — birth, family, position, and, supposedly, culture and breeding, is very much finer and less vulgar than the ambition of the man whose greed is for money — simply money — nothing higher, and nothing more."

Mr. Englishman looked positively impressed. He said: "By Jove!" and added that he had never thought of it in that

way before. When an Englishman is nice, he is very nice indeed, but when he is rude he is so horrid that he makes the average American ashamed of his ancestors.

Another guest was expected by us a few days ago, but just as he was about to leave Santa Marta the Government demanded his horse for the use of some officer, and now he is waiting with what patience he can for the animal to be returned. Up here we seem far away from the war, but it is going right on with no signs of an end. To-day a *mozo* brought up the news of four hundred liberals in Bonda, and consequent alarm and excitement in Santa Marta, only five miles away. I am glad my trunks are at the consulate! The Government is seizing every man it can lay its hands on, so that it is not safe to send *arrieros* down. Already one of our *mozos* has been taken. An evening or two ago a small force of armed men came from Santa Marta up the valley, seizing men and mules as they could catch them. Sixteen mules and some men were taken from our nearest neighbors, on an English plantation, three miles below us. A *mozo* who escaped brought the alarm up to us, and our men flew to the moun-

tains, to spend the night in the woods. All our mules were hidden, so that by the time the "commission" reached here, as far as we were concerned there was not a *mozo* nor a mule in the world. Mr. Martin says he has enough provisions here on the *finca* (plantation) to last three months, in case we should be absolutely unable to keep up communication with the coast. I believe my chief thought in such an event would be — mail. The banana boat comes to Santa Marta every fourteen days, so that the time is divided into mail week and no mail week. However, it will always be safe for Mr. Martin himself to go down — the Government can hardly impress an American citizen — and in an extremity he could be our postman. I had a package of letters to-day, more than half of them from people who expected me home on the steamer of six weeks ago. The mail was sent to my New York address, and then forwarded to me here. It was mostly invitations —"To lunch, Tuesday;" "To dinner, Thursday;" "To spend Sunday," and so on. I had, as I read, a queer, mixed feeling of being almost at home, and at the same time, very, very far away.

One letter, Edith's, says that Kent Winthrop has gone off somewhere, no one knows where, or what for. I have not had one word from him since the note he sent to the steamer, the day I sailed for Liverpool.

"Good-bye," he said, then. "If you ever feel that you have had all of Europe that you want, there will always be New York to come back to, you know."

I have always kept that note. Once in a while I think of the last words, and they make a warm, comfortable sort of feeling around my heart—"There will always be New York to come back to, you know."

Now, it seems, Kent himself has left New York. I wonder why.

June 20th.

The next time I meet an angel, I am going to say to her:

"Angel, that fearing-to-tread policy of yours is utterly and entirely a mistaken one."

"Why?" she will demand, with some asperity, for even angels (in fact, especially angels) hate to be told that they are in the wrong—"Why?"

"Because," I shall answer, firmly, "be-

cause it is a policy which, as long as you permit it to dictate to you, will prevent you from doing those things that you wish to do by making you believe that some day you will wish that you had not done them."

And then, to convince her that such belief is quite unsupported by experience, I shall relate the true tale of my rushing in.

I had a queer dream last night. I thought that the father of some acquaintances of mine in New York had died, and that I, as soon as I heard of the bereavement, had called at the house and left my card. I had written one word on the card before handing it in, and that word I had intended to be Sympathy. To my horror, however, no sooner was the door of the house closed, and I out on the sidewalk, that I knew for an absolute certainty that what I had really said had been not Sympathy, but — Congratulations.

Some persons, I believe, would take that dream as a warning that if they stayed too long in uncivilised places they would not know how to conduct themselves when once they returned to lands enlightened. For my part, I think that if it has any significance at all, it points out what foolish, unmean-

ing things people do when they move in metropolitan society.

Now "we"— by way of contrast — "we" have been planting coffee trees — 22,000 of them during the past four days.

Coffee-planting time on a *finca* is a season not to be lightly entered upon, nor to be lived through save by walking delicately, and taking much serious thought for the morrow. It is planned for and arranged days beforehand, every circumstance (but, above all, the weather) being taken into consideration, and, as far as possible, rendered propitious. We are now well along in the rainy season, but each year, at about this time, occurs what is called by the natives *"El verano de San Juan"*—"St. John's summer"— and by that they mean a period of a week or ten days, within which, if it rain at all, the downfall is very slight. To put in coffee trees during *El verano de San Juan* would be folly, because, unless the treelings are well soaked within twenty-hours after they are transplanted, they will probably die; or, if they manage to live, they will never flourish. The trouble is that even an experienced manager can not be sure when the summer of St. John

will arrive, for if it occurred on schedule time, it would not be a Colombian season. Rain may have fallen every day for weeks; it may be long before the *verano* could possibly be expected; and the manager may decide that the hour for planting is at hand. He puts in several thousand coffee trees, when, behold; a ten days' drought, and all has been done in vain.

These little trees that Mr. Martin and the *mozos* have been putting in during the last four days are the fittest among thousands upon thousands that came up from seeds sown in the nurseries a year ago. Only the strongest and best are taken. The roots are most carefully put into holes that have been most carefully prepared for them, and then the holes are most carefully filled in, that no rootlet may be broken or injured. When one considers that on the growth and vigor of these trees depend the coffee crops of the future, and that upon the coffee crops of the future depends the success or failure of El Cafetal, one understands why planting-time is taken so seriously.

In these days Mr. Martin is up at four

o'clock (and so is Mrs. Martin). He has his coffee by lamplight, and goes forth with his men long before sunrise. By daylight they are in the clearing, where over twenty thousand holes have already been dug. Some of the men carry on their backs great loads of the young trees from the nurseries to the clearing, where others receive them and put them into the holes, as I have said. All day long Mr. Martin watches jealously, lest a single root of one tree be handled carelessly. His breakfast is sent out to him, for he is too far away from the house to return at noon. During the morning the sun beats hotly, even at this altitude; and, from one to four, the rain, as cold as the sun was hot, comes soaking down. (*Ojala!* For if not, it may be that this planting will have to be done all over again.) About five comes home Mr. Martin, tired, hungry, wet — but if wet, then happy — for the same rain that has gone "*à chorros*" down the back of his neck has fallen on the ground, and so soaked the roots of the little trees that they, three years hence, will begin to bring forth fruit — let us hope one hundred fold.

June 24th., Sunday.

The nearest church of any kind is in Santa Marta, twenty miles from here. The nearest Protestant church, as far as I know, is in Barranquilla. We Cafetalanos do not go to church; but "Nature comes, sometimes, and says, 'I am ambassador for God!'" Going to church does not make a Sunday. — I have had real Sabbaths without church, and, in Bogota, real church with no Sabbath.

Here in the mountains we go to bed on Saturday nights with a blessed sense of an unlimited sleeping time before us. As a matter of fact, we do not sleep very late, but we sleep as long as we like, and princes and potentates can do no more. *Desayuno* is taken lingeringly, in a large, unhurried atmosphere of rest; then, with health and a day, we set about making the pomp of emperors ridiculous.

This morning we fared us forth, over the plantation. Mrs. Martin and I rode mules, for the way is long and steep; but Mr. Martin and the children, Carmie, Alva and Clara, walked sturdily. On and on we went, slowly and happily, because "the world is so full of a number of things," until at last we reached

what is, undoubtedly, the site of an old Indian village. There is a large, level space where once were dwellings — that is quite evident from the quantity of broken pottery lying about — remains of bowls, cooking utensils and water jars. In the centre of the area is lying, embedded in the earth, so that only its upper surface is visible, an enormous flat stone, circular in shape; and, making a complete circle around it, are smaller stones, also flat. Mrs. Martin and I are tormented by a great desire to know what it all means, and what is buried within this circle. Something there must be; those slabs were not put there for nothing. It must have been with some serious purpose that the old Indians cut and shaped the stones, and with so much labor placed them as they are.

If Mr. Martin is at all interested in the matter, he will not admit it. We beg him to have at least the great centre stone taken up, but he points out that to do so would be a tremendous piece of work, requiring the time and labor of many *mozos;* and the time and labor of *mozos,* he seems to believe, are more wisely employed in planting coffee trees.

This afternoon, after we had returned

from our *paseo,* had had a late breakfast and were sitting out on the corridor, I spoke to Don Pepe about my interest in the Indians of by-gone days. He has travelled all over this region, on mules and on foot, leagues and leagues beyond our valley, and has lived for weeks at a time with Indian tribes far in the interior — tribes who scarcely know the white man, or are know of him. Once, he says, he met an Indian who told him that he was one hundred and ten years old, and Don Pepe says the man certainly looked it. This aged red man had heard from his grandfather strange tales of the days when the Spanish priests first came to the land, and if half the things he told Don Pepe were true, those " fathers " must have been a precious lot. I got so excited, hearing about it, that our assistant actually went down to the store and climbed up again, bringing back with him a paper, written in Spanish, in a fine little Latin hand. He handed it to me, and this is a translation of what I read:

" Related by Teti Florez Izquirdo, an Indian one hundred and ten years old, regarding the arrival of the Capuchin fathers, or priests, to the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

"Those, dressed in red, who have long beards and a tonsure around the head are truly Capuchins." (A capuchin is a South American monkey, with the hair on the head aranged like a cowl.) "They are identical with those who, hundreds of years before (my great-grandfather, Nastuyama, and my grandfather, Nasarumaka, related it to me, as I tell it to-day), had, besides those signs, rosaries at the waist, together with a cord with knots, and sandals on their feet. Thus they are always the same, and perhaps with the same ideas. Perhaps, in such case, they will again persecute the Indians, and compel them to change their religion. Again they will want to catch us with halters around our necks, to force us to live in villages. They will want, as they did then, to compel us to bring them sheep, fish, fowls, eggs, potatoes, onions, and everything else that they may care to ask for. If, unfortunately, there are any Indians who resist their demands, they will tie us hand and foot, and thus they will cause us to approach the fire, burning the sole of the foot until we agree to what they require. If by reason of the time of our freedom there should be any strong Indian who could

endure those torments, they will not then content themselves, but will call the other Indians cowards, because they are indolent, to induce them to cut more firewood, quantities of firewood, enough to make a pile as high as our houses. They will fasten, in front of the church, a post, and they will tie to it any one who has had strength to resist. Then they will heap around the post all the firewood that may have been cut, and when they think that it is enough, one of them will set fire to the wood; another, with a cross in his hand, will say that he has from God a sickness in his body, and that this Indian burns in order that others may not have this sickness also. When the poor Indian begins to cry and scream, then all the priests begin to sing, and keep on singing until there remains nothing of the Indian, nor of the post, nor of the firewood — nothing more than a pile of ashes. As we punish children, they will give us lashes in the public square; they will cut our ears, our noses, our fingers and our toes. They will take away our sons in order to convert them, and our women will suffer the same punishments as ourselves. Know, therefore, that not one of us may esteem these

greybeards. The best that could happen would be that they die of hunger, or that they would go away. No Indian would permit himself to sell them food, or to give them water; he who would do that would consider himself an enemy to his race, and the good God would punish him in his own time. They will begin as sheep and they will end as tigers. They will commence by giving us medals which value nothing, and figures painted on paper; then, little by little, they will collect all they have given us, and will end by consuming everything we have. No one may approach the place where they live, that they may manage for themselves. As to their eating and drinking, water there is in the river, and food the earth gives; he who will may plant and eat. From us they shall not have one blade of grass. So let it be."

This is quaint reading, but must have been very serious living, I should think. As to the priests' singing and continuing to sing while the poor Indian was burning, it makes me think, with a shudder, of one morning in Santa Marta, before I came up here. I was calling on Mrs. Anson, who lives close to the *cuartel* or barracks, when suddenly there

was a great flourish of trumpets, and then loud, crashing music by the military band. If it had been in Bogota I should have thought that the liberals had won a victory, for the Government always sent up consolation fireworks, and made a great show of music and parades whenever they had been defeated. But in Santa Marta I was puzzled. Mrs. Anson listened attentively, then,—

"Do you know what that means?" she asked, with a queer expression on her face, —a little frightened and a great deal indignant.

"No," I answered, "What?"

"They are whipping some soldiers in there"—pointing to the *cuartel*—"and the music is to drown their cries. Whenever *that* tune is played we understand what is going on!"

Sunday evening Mrs. Martin usually tells Bible stories to the children in their own room. To-night, for some reason, Alva elected to stay in the *sala* with me. When I first came, the children spoke only Spanish, though they understand English when they hear it. I have been trying to encourage them to use their mother tongue, and the re-

sult is that in their conversations with me the mixture of languages is sometimes very funny.

"*Yo soy* baby; *porqué tu* no sing?" (I am a baby; why don't you sing to me?) began Alva, to-night, after she had climbed into my lap, as I sat in a big chair in front of the open fire. The seven-year-old "baby" is very fond of being petted and sung to.

So I began with "Rock-a-bye, Baby," which she particularly fancies, especially,

"And *down* will come Baby, cradle and all."

When I had finished,—

"*Ahora, los pigitos,*" (Now the little pigs) she demanded.

I knew what that meant, so, taking her hand, I began in the time-honored way, bending down her thumb, and saying,

"This little pig went to market,"

Then the forefinger,—

"This little pig stayed home,"

But here I was interrupted.

"*En español,*" (In Spanish) said my Baby.

Fancy "This little pig went to market," in Spanish! However, I rushed in, as usual, and began a literal translation. I think there

were chuckles from Don Pepe, smoking out on the corridor.

Este marranito se fué al mercado,
Este marranito quedó en casa,
Este marranito tenia roast beef,
Este marranito no tenia nada,
Este marranito gritó, "Wee! wee! wee!"

"*Asi gritan los pigitos?*" (Is that the way pigs cry?) asked Alva, as I finished.

"Why, yes," I told her. "Haven't you ever heard the little pigs squealing?"

"*Si* (yes), but no in *English. Aqui gritan en español.*" (Here they cry in Spanish).

In the pause that followed my laugh, her attention was caught by something her mother was saying to the other children, in the adjoining room, and she announced, suddenly,

"*Yo no quiero die.*" (I don't want to die.)

"Why do you say that, little one?" I asked, holding her close. "You're not going to die just yet, I hope."

"But sometime?" she persisted.

"Why, yes; sometime."

"*Y donde voy yo, pues?*" (and where shall I go, then?)

"To the *cielo,*" (heaven) I told her.

"Not in the ground, like Fido?" (Fido was a pet dog who died.)

"Your body will go into the ground," I tried to explain; "but the part of you that thinks and feels and talks will come out of your body and go up to the *cielo.*"

She considered this, and then asked,

"And shall I still be little Alva?"

I told her "Yes," because I think so. Perhaps I ought to have said, *Quien sabe?*

Her next question was,

"Where are your papa and your mama?"

"In the *cielo.*"

"Are there many people in the *cielo?*"

"Oh, yes; a great, great many."

"Who takes care of them?"

"Why *Dios* (God) takes care of them, dear."

Her notions of being taken care of relate chiefly to shelter, food and raiment, and she said, next,

"Where does *Dios* get enough houses, and things for them all to eat, and dresses for them?"

I felt unequal to unfolding the conception of an immaterial *cielo,* so I said, only,

"Oh, you know *Dios* can do anything. He has plenty of everything that he wants to give to the people."

"He must be very rich," she commented, thoughtfully. Then followed a deduction, logical, inevitable. In her world there is one thing and one thing only that makes for wealth.—

"*Entonces tendra montones de cafe!*" (Then He must have *mountains* of coffee!)

Wednesday, 27th.

Who would have supposed that a day as quiet and peaceful as Sunday would have been followed by one as exciting and turbulent as Monday was?

I was teaching Carmelita in my room. I had asked her to give me the plural of ox, and she had said "Bulls," with entire conviction. I am afraid I made rather a botch of my correction; — at any rate, her attention wandered, and she began to look out of the window, and to be interested in what was going on *por afuera.*

"Carmelita," I said, reprovingly; "never mind what they are doing outside. Attend to what I am trying to explain to you."

Just then we heard a confused noise as of children crying, and a servant ran past the window.

"Something is the matter!" exclaimed Carmelita, and started up from her chair.

I supposed that Willie had fallen off the corridor, or that Clara had stepped on a nail, or that Alva had burned her hand making a *sancocho*. These are all incidents of our daily life, and always produce excitement; but I saw no reason why the disturbance should interrupt Carmelita's lesson.

"Never mind," I said, again, primly, and in my most disciplinary tone. "It does not matter *what* is happening. While I am teaching you, even if the house is on fire, you —"

At that instant Mrs. Martin simply flew into the room.

"The kitchen is on fire!" she panted. "Oh, come! Come, quick!"

We ran, teacher and taught, out of the door, into a scene of wildest excitement and confusion.

The kitchen, storeroom and servants' rooms are detached from the main house, but are yet so near that a fire in one means immi-

nent danger to the other. Although Mrs. Martin had called us on the instant, by the time I got outside, the kitchen roof was a sheet of flame. The roof is of palm thatch, like that of the main house, and it was burning like an autumn bonfire of dead leaves.

With presence of mind, the first thing Mrs. Martin did was to give the alarm by having the gong sounded — the old hoe blade, hammered with a stone. This is done only at noon and at night, for the men to stop work, so that at ten o'clock in the morning its untimely clamor meant something seriously out of the ordinary. In an incredibly short time Mr. Martin came tearing up the hill on a mule, and following him, running, came *mozos* and *mozos*. There is only one ladder, and Mrs. Martin and I had it up by the time the men got to us. They swarmed onto the roof, and began hacking at the thatch with their machetes, and throwing burning bundles of palm down to the ground. We women scattered these, pouring on water and stamping out the fire. In less than an hour the danger was over. The kitchen was without a roof; of course, some things had been broken, and household furnishings, hastily

carried out, lay in confusion all over the place. But that was all. The fire had not been allowed to spread, and even the *despensa* (storeroom) and servants' rooms were untouched. That very afternoon men with mules went into the woods, and cut new poles for the framework of the roof and great bundles of palm for thatch, and to-night everything is finished and in order again.

There were no lessons yesterday or this morning, for we have all been rather upset, and busy putting things to rights. There has been no occasion, therefore, again to rebuke Carmelita for inattention.

. . . . . .

One other thing happened Monday morning: in the midst of the fire a new personality came into my life. Entered El Señor Don Roberto Alvarez.

I have said that, as the thatch was cut away from the roof, it was thrown to the ground in great, burning masses; and that these were instantly seized upon by us below, broken up, scattered and extinguished. I had an old broom handle for a thresher, and with it I laid about me vigorously — perchance too vigorously.

For, suddenly, there was a presence at my elbow, and a voice saying to me, imperatively,—

"Don't throw that burning stuff down the bank! The fern's as dry as tinder, and you'll start another fire if you don't mind!"

I looked up and saw two intense brown eyes, and a hand stretched out to take my broom handle away from me, as from one unfit to be trusted with it another moment. The owner of the eyes and the hand was a man whom I had never seen before, nor even heard of; and even yet, though I now know who he is, I do not know how he got there. I suppose he must have been riding near, have heard our alarm, or seen the smoke, and come quickly to our assistance. Anyway there he was, giving me orders in an English more English than an English English, but in a voice which I instantly knew had never been born in England.

Mrs. Martin has since told me everything. El Señor Don Roberto Alvarez was born in Bogota. When he was five years old, political differences of opinion were the cause of his father's taking the whole family to Paris,

where they are to this day. In the meantime, however, Don Roberto was educated mostly in Devon — hence his English. Three years ago he came back to his native land, unaccompanied, except by a letter of introduction from his father to the father's old friend, the owner of "Vista Linda," an *hacienda* below us in this valley. There Don Roberto was taken on at first as a working pupil with no salary, and then, as he began to know coffee, as assistant with small salary. Now he is manager, drawing something like $100 a month. In time, either his father will buy "Vista Linda," which is for sale, or Don Roberto will denounce land further on up the valley, and begin to make a new plantation for himself.

In the meantime, he is our neighbor — as neighborhood goes in the Sierra Nevadas — and though I do not quite like being told that I can not be trusted with an old broom handle, yet I have always admired intense brown eyes, and I find, now, that a certain un-English rolling of the "r" in Señorita may be very attractive.

July 6th.

WE have "been down" — Mr. and Mrs. Martin, Don Roberto and I. We came up yesterday.

Last Monday morning, in the midst of lessons, La Niña Eva appeared at the door, with a note in her hand.

"This has just come," she said, gayly waving the paper. "It is from Mrs. Anson, and we are invited to spend the Fourth in Santa Marta."

(Mrs. Anson is the wife of that Mr. Anson who said "Good Lord!" when I told him I had come to this part of the world for pleasure.)

"Are we going?" I asked, breathlessly.

"Of course we are going," said Mrs. Martin. "You, and Mr. Martin and I —"

At that moment the tramping of a mule's hoofs was heard, as someone rode up to the corridor. We looked out, and there was Don Roberto.

"I can't stop a moment," he called to us. Then he dismounted, came into the *sala,* and stayed three-quarters of an hour.

"Of course you're all going down to the Ansons' *paranda,*" he began the moment we were seated.

"We have just this moment had Mrs. Anson's note," answered Mrs. Martin, "but we have already decided to accept. Are you going?" This last was superfluous, for *go* was written all over him.

"Well, rather!" he said. "That's what I came up about. Can't we all go down together? What time will you start?"

"Oh, you know Mr. Martin," laughed Mr. Martin's wife. "If he has his way, we'll be off by moonlight. He likes to get down before it's hot, and before the rain begins."

As a matter of fact it was seven the next morning when we rode away from the house. We left Don Pepe in charge of the *finca,* and domestic matters with Juana and Andrea — two women who have been the children's nurses and are devoted to them. Don Roberto appeared for coffee at half past six. As we had to pass "Vista Linda" on the

way down the valley he might have waited to join us at his own front door, but he did not, so there were four of us, riding single file, besides an *arriero* on foot, driving the cargo mule with our luggage.

We went down in less than five hours, and we did not get wet, so one of Mr. Martin's desires was fulfilled; but as for the other, by the time we reached the plain the sun was scorching. We crossed the river (I am always so relieved when I get safely over a river, for once I heard of a mule that lay down and rolled, in the middle of a stream, perfectly regardless of the rider on its back), went on for an hour or more under the dark green of the mango trees, and, about noon, rode into Santa Marta. It had been nearly a month since I had left that town to come up into the woods, and as, when I first went there from Bogota and Barranquilla, the place seemed about as large as a toy village, I was immensely surprised, on Tuesday, to find it looking like a metropolis.

It really ought not to be small, for certainly it is not young. I wonder if places are ever sensitive about their age. I am so fond of Santa Marta, and it has always been

so nice to me, that I should hate to hurt its feelings by any remarks concerning the number of seasons — I mean rainy and dry seasons — that it has been before the public. Such things, however, are only matters of comparison, and I remember, now, that when I spoke of the antiquity of Santa Marta to one of the officers of the "Adirondack" — of course a German — he said, "Himmel! Fraülein, *that* is not old!" At any rate, it is said to be the oldest existing town in the Western Hemisphere, founded by the Spaniards in 1525. It was already fifty years old, when — as Kingsley tells us, in "Westward Ho!" the Bishop of Cartagena sat in the cabin of his great galleon, sipping wine cooled "in a pail of ice from the Horqueta," and gazing out on "the bay of Santa Marta, rippling before the land breeze, one sheet of living flame." "Golden tropic sea," describes Kingsley; "and the golden tropic evenings, by the shore of New Granada, in the golden Spanish Main." It is very like that, as one sits on the Ansons' balcony, looking off on the water, the Morro, and (on a curve of the shore) the ruins of Drake's Fort.

The Ansons live in a perfectly enormous house that was once a monastery. The *patio* is all arcaded, and as we rode into it, on Tuesday, and I saw it again, after a month, it seemed to me that it looked larger and quainter and more Ferdinand-and-Isabella-like than ever.

We were the last to arrive of the house party. Think of a house party in Santa Marta! If the old monks have been looking down on their monastery, lately, they must have been amazed; and, as I dare say monks are not very different from other persons, I shouldn't wonder a bit if they have been rather envious as well.

In the first place, there were Mr. and Mrs. Anson and Baby — the last being Mr. Anson's sister, aged eighteen — years, not months. The Ansons are Americans, but I believe they lived for a time in Canada; anyway, somehow or other Baby was educated in a convent in Montreal, and the result is the most delectable combination of American girl and French novice that one could wish to see. Why Don Roberto is not in love with Baby is more than I can understand. Of course it may be that he is, but

in that case I should not think he would — I mean, if he is, one would suppose that he would pay her more attention. Perhaps it is because young Mr. Hunter does not give him a chance; yet Don Roberto seems to be a man who would not ask to have chances given to him, but would rather say, like Napoleon, "Opportunities? I *make* opportunities!" Mr. Hunter is another one of our neighbors up here in the mountains; that is, he is "learning coffee" on a plantation ("La Ventura") in the next valley to ours. The Ansons have a little place — a country house, so to speak — in the same valley, not more than half an hour by mule from "La Ventura," and they are up there a great deal of the time. Harry Hunter is an Englishman (but not the one who called here the other day!), and he is so shy — and so handsome — that I really do not know how Baby has the heart to tease him as she does. The American girl part of her goes to such lengths, sometimes, that the Britisher's head tells him he ought to disapprove of her. Then the demure little novice comes to the fore, and it is not an English head, but just a man's heart that is at all concerned in the

matter. I am perfectly sure he tells himself dozens of times that she is too flippant, too independent, too — in short, too American. Then, more dozens of times, he does not analyse her at all, but simply feels that she is the sweetest girl, American or English, that he will ever know. And, really, she is not flippant at all, and not so very independent, if he only knew it. I am not sure whether she cares for him or not, but as she is so young I am afraid his chances, for the present at least, are not very good. American girls seldom make their life's decision at eighteen; they are usually having so good a time at that age that they want to feel that they are free to keep on having good times for a number of years yet.

Well — but I was naming the house party. We were, then, Mr. and Mrs. Anson, Baby, Mr. and Mrs. Martin and governess (me, Constance Parnell), Mr. and Mrs. Campbell (Manager and Mrs. Manager of "La Ventura"), Don Roberto, Harry Hunter, Mr. Manners — the disagreeable Englishman — only, of course, he is not always disagreeable — and one more, to whom I am going to give several lines in a few moments. All

these were staying in the house. Others of the small Santa Marta foreign colony, as, for instance, El Señor and La Señora Consul; Mr. and Mrs. British Consul; Mr. Cunningham, of the United Fruit Company, and so on, were more or less interested in Fourth of July, as the case might be.

As for the "One More" of our house party — of all persons in the world, it was Kent Winthrop!

It was the very afternoon of our arrival in Santa Marta that the "Adirondack" came in. We could see the steamer when it was still far outside the Morro, and when it came to anchor at the dock, we were all there to meet it, to get our mail. The gangplank was thrown out, the few passengers went down it as we went up, and there, in the middle, Kent and I came face to face, both too surprised to speak. I must do him the justice to admit that he has not followed me here to South America; — he was quite as honestly amazed as I was. He is always honest. I will admit that, also.

It was Mr. Anson who said the first word.

"Why, hello, Winthrop!" he exclaimed. "I thought you weren't coming till the next

steamer. Awfully glad to see you, just the same. Just wait till we get the mail, and we'll go back to the house. This is my wife, whom you've never met. And this is Miss Parnell — Oh —!"

Kent and I interrupted him by finding our tongues, and exclaiming, simultaneously,—

"Are *you* here?"

It seemed to me the most natural thing in the world that I was there, although of course I can realize that it was the last place in the world in which Kent would have expected to see me. The strange part of it, to me, was *his* presence in Santa Marta, though now that it has been explained, I know that he really had much more reason to be there than I had. He, at least, did not come for pleasure, and Mr. Anson did not say "Good Lord!" to him. Mr. Anson, in fact, was the cause of Kent's being there. How queer it is that those two men were at college together, and that I should have known one of them so well, and never have heard of the other till I came to Santa Marta, two months ago. It seems that they have written to each other, now and again, and that, through Mr. Anson, Kent has been interested in Coffee

much longer than I have. And now — he has come down here to look into the matter for himself, and if he is satisfied, he is going to buy land and begin a plantation!

As we walked back to the house from the steamer, Kent said to me:

"When did you leave Europe?"

"A year and a half ago," I told him.

"A year and a half ago!" he repeated; — "Then how long were you there?"

"Less than six months."

Here an Expression came into his eyes. I cannot describe it; I can only write it with a capital E.

"Why?" he questioned, "didn't you — wasn't it all that you expected?"

"Oh, *quite,*" I assured him, hastily. "But I had a good opportunity to come to South America, and I thought I could see Europe another time, and so I went to Bogota."

"You have been in South America for over a year, then."

"Yes."

"And now?"

"Now I am a governess, on a coffee plantation, up in the mountains."

He looked at me, without speaking, for

what seemed minutes and minutes. Then — that appears to be the general impression that I make on the men whom I meet — he said, exactly as Mr. Anson had done,—

"Good Lord!"

I wonder if I am too fond of travel. I asked Don Roberto, that evening, as we sat on the deck of the "Adirondack," happening to be a little apart by ourselves.

"Certainly not," he reassured me, warmly. "That is one thing that makes you so different from most women." (I had not known that he thought me different from most women; that is, I had not been sure.) "Travel is broadening. I like it, myself, better than almost anything else in the world. Fancy," he said, "if you hadn't cared for travel, you would not be here now!"

How very expressive brown eyes are! Kent's are grey.

Wednesday was the Fourth. The Ansons had planned a picnic to San Pedro, where is the house in which Bolivar died. It is the place to which El Señor Consul drove me the day that he suggested my going to the mountains as governess, never thinking that I should take him seriously.

This time almost all of our party of twenty rode mules. We started quite early in the morning, had a gay picnic lunch, with toasts and speeches, and then some one suggested riding on to Wasca. Kent was, of course, the only one of us to whom an Indian village was not an old story, for though I had never seen Wasca before, I had seen innumerable mud huts between the coast and Bogota. But El Señor Consul said there might be some wild-pigeon shooting; Kent was eager to go; I wanted to see the ruins of the old Spanish Church that I had heard of, and, in the end, every one went.

The church was really worth while, though there is so little left of it now. The roof is gone, except in one corner, where the altar was, and the walls are in ruins. It was over in the altar corner that I found, lying on the ground, nearly covered by debris, some pieces of old carved wood. I picked up one block, about eight inches square, and announced that I was going to take it away with me.

"Indeed you are not!" declared El Señor Consul. "These people wouldn't allow it for one moment."

"What people?" I asked. "Do you mean these savages?" I waved my hand to include the two rows of huts, and the half naked population. "You can't mean that *they* value antiques and pieces of old carving!"

"Well, no," admitted El Señor Consul, smiling; — "not as antiques and pieces of old carving. But they're superstitious to the last degree, and they would expect the heavens to fall on them if they allowed anyone to carry off a splinter of what was once a church. You are not the first person who has wanted the stuff," he informed me. "The consul from Barranquilla came over here to see the church, and he went simply wild over these carvings. He offered to buy the whole lot, but the people wouldn't hear of it. They certainly won't let you have any."

This seemed to me absurd. If there were any sacrilege about the matter, it was in leaving those delightful old bits lying there on the ground — the floor of the church is all gone — in the midst of every kind of rubbish, to become worm-eaten and broken, and doing no one a particle of good. If I took

one of the pieces, it would at least be kept, for the future, where it would be preserved and appreciated.

"They are not going to be asked," I said, replying to El Señor Consul's last remark. Then I calmly picked up my block and walked with it down the one street, in full view of the entire population, and no one said as much as *Caramba!* The carving is now here, on the mantel shelf, in our *sala.*

I have said that the people of Wasca are half-naked savages. Yet in one of the huts, no different from the others, there is living an educated white man. We were going away from the church, towards our mules, Mr. Anson and I walking together, when a man, who, I am perfectly sure, was born a gentleman, came to the doorway of one of the mud houses, and spoke to Mr. Anson in English. Mr. Anson stopped, and naturally, so did I. At first, I supposed that this man, an Anglo-Saxon, and by every tone of his voice a gentleman, was someone who was passing through Wasca, just as we were. Then — I don't quite know how — I realized that he was at home there. There is only one room in each of those huts, and

from where we stood, in the doorway, I could not help seeing the whole interior of the house. An Indian girl was cooking something over the stone fire-place in the corner; on the mud floor, a little child about two years old sat playing with a gourd drinking cup; a table in the middle of the room held some papers and a book or two; — except for these last, it was a native's home, pure and simple. The situation told its own story.

I walked on, but almost immediately Mr. Anson overtook me. For a moment or two neither of us spoke.

"Well," he said presently, looking at me with a smile; "are you shocked, Miss Parnell? One has to get used to that sort of thing down here, you know."

"No;" I shook my head. "I don't think 'shocked' is what I am feeling."

"What, then?" he queried. "You are feeling something rather profoundly, I gather from your face."

"I was thinking," I said, "thinking — that it is such a pity!"

"Oh!" responded Mr. Anson, in a tone that asked for further information.

"I am sure he feels it himself," I went on, following my own thoughts.

"Feels what?"

"Didn't I hear him ask you for new magazines?"

"Very likely. He's always keen about them. What then?"

"There were some books on the table, too."

Mr. Anson made a gesture as of one befogged. "My dear Miss Parnell," he appealed, "what are you getting at?"

"An educated man," I explained, "a gentleman — living like that —"

Mr. Anson shrugged his shoulders. "It is rather a throwing away of good material," he owned. "The man has deteriorated awfully in three years.— I don't know what it is about this place," he declared, "that seems to drag young men into that sort of thing. I suppose most of 'em can't afford a wife, so they take what they can have. They don't usually go into it quite as deep as this chap, though. As a rule it's *pour passer le temps,* and then they go home and get married."

"Fancy marrying a man like that!" I

uttered on the impulse of the moment; then instantly wished I had kept silence.

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Anson, just as I knew he would. "What do you say, Miss Parnell?"

"I am sorry I said anything," I returned, vexedly. "I couldn't possibly make you understand."

"Oh, I say!" he expostulated. "Don't say that. Put it as simply as you can, and I'll try to follow you."

I knew he was smiling, inside, but I had foolishly commenced, and there was nothing but to follow up my indiscretion.

"Well — suppose," I said, "suppose a man, with this man's experience, does go home, as you say, and get married. How do you think he feels when the first baby comes to him and his wife?"

"How does he feel?" repeated Mr. Anson, evidently surprised. "Why, I don't know. Just the way any other man feels, I suppose."

"How can he?" I contested. "Oh, I know what you men say.— That this sort of thing is only an incident; that a man doesn't *love* an Indian girl; that it is a differ-

ent sort of feeling, altogether. That when he, afterward, marries a girl in his own class, he truly cares for her, just as if the Indian girl had never existed.— Perhaps he does, but —"

"But what?" insisted Mr. Anson, as I hesitated.

"Well," I said, "it seems to me that such a man defrauds his wife of something that every woman has a right to claim. When their baby comes he *can't* feel about it as she does. It doesn't mean to him what it does to her. He can't sympathise with her in the feeling of awe and solemnity that must come with the first realization of parentage. How could he? He has been through it all before. He has already held his first child in his arms. You know it can never be the same again."—

I don't know what Mr. Anson would have said; I was glad there was no opportunity for him to say anything. For, luckily, we came to the mules at that moment, and Don Roberto hurried forward and helped me to mount.

We went on from Wasca towards the electric light plant. Mud huts and electric

light! How the white man carries his civilisation about with him. Near the plant El Señor Consul shot the first iguana I ever saw, and of all the nightmare-ish creatures! It was in a tree, and though mortally wounded by the shot, it had life enough, as it fell, to clutch at a branch and hang there for several minutes before it dropped into the little stream below. They say people eat those things. For my part, "I'd ruther let starvation wipe me slowly out o' sight."

In the cool of the late afternoon we rode back to "town," and afterward we were all entertained at dinner at the British Consulate, where the English and the American flags were intertwined. In the evening we went on board the "Adirondack" and there were fireworks, but I could not realize that we were celebrating the Fourth of July. The search-light of the steamer swept over Santa Marta, lingered on the old Spanish Cathedral, turned the white houses into glittering palaces, and the surrounding cocoanut palms into waving, shadowy plumes. Then the brilliance was thrown over the bay, the Morro, and the ruins of the fort; and, far from caring anything, at that moment, for

the Star Spangled Banner, I sat dreaming myself back over three hundred years, to the days of the *Conquistadores* — their treasure and their galleons. "That, after all, is the great thing about travelling," says Maud Howe; "you visit not only different countries, but different ages."

I remembered this, and it was then that I questioned Don Roberto as to my, perhaps, over-fondness for seeing the world. He answered as I have said, and then, as if he had felt my thoughts of the moment before, he began to talk of the old Spaniards, and to tell me stories of their treasure.

"You know," he reminded me, "those old chaps had to leave this country in a great hurry, but undoubtedly they expected to return. They buried or hid their loot, and after all, they never came back for it. It's here yet, lots of it. Have you heard of the man who excited so much comment in Santa Marta, by his coming and his going, a year or so ago?"

"No," I said. "I've been told quantities of treasure stories, especially in the interior — Honda is full of them — but I never heard that one."

"It's really nothing definite. It was just after I came back here, from England. A man — a Spaniard — the real thing — landed here one day from Barranquilla, having come by the Royal Mail. He brought two big trunks with him, and the men who handled the trunks say they were empty. Well, he went to the hotel and took a room, and stayed in it a whole day, looking at some papers and making drawings — at least so the *muchachas* (maids) say. Then he got a mule cart, put his two empty trunks on it, and went off, somewhere, entirely alone. He was gone a day and a night. He came back with his trunks, and this time two men apiece could hardly lift them. He left for Baranquilla by the next boat, trunks of course with him, and that was the last that was ever heard of him."

"But what was in the trunks?" I cried, much excited.

"*Quien sabe?* But everyone here believes that the man was a descendant of one of the *Conquistadores,* and that he had the key to some treasure hidden by his ancestors. They say he just came with his papers, lo-

cated the secret spot, and then sailed off with the gold."

"Do *you* think so?" I asked him.

"Do you care what I think?" questioned Don Roberto.

. . . . . .

The next morning, that is, yesterday morning, we left Santa Marta at six o'clock, and were back here at El Cafetel for breakfast. The trip up is much pleasanter than the one going down, because coming this way the air grows fresher and fresher, and the latter part of the journey, when one is apt to be tired, is taken through the crisp coolness of the mountains. Who would be in New York, hanging onto the strap of a crowded cable car, who could have a mule to himself, in the Sierra Nevadas?

Kent, of course, is still with the Ansons. I suppose he will stay there until he decides whether or not to buy land. If I were a man, I should like to have affairs that are connected with land. Up to this, I have wanted to be an ambassador at some important foreign court, but now I know that I should prefer the life of an agriculturist.

Mr. Martin laughed when I said this last night at dinner, and asked me why I didn't go in for market gardening.

"I suppose I might have a garden here," I said, "but where is the market?"

"Why, Santa Marta," returned Mr. Martin, instantly. "I never knew a place more in need of fresh vegetables."

It is true that I have never seen a blade or a leaf of one there, and that Mrs. Anson and the other foreign housekeepers are constantly bewailing the impossibility of escape from tinned peas and asparagus.

"Do you really mean it?" I demanded of Mr. Martin. "I think it would be the most interesting thing I ever heard of."

"Well, as to that," demurred the man of experience, "I have my doubts. It is hard work, you know.— Isn't it?" he appealed to Mrs. Martin.

"It *is* hard work," conceded La Niña Eva, reluctantly. (Never was a woman less given to wet-blanketing one's propositions.) "But I like it," she added, immediately; "and *quien sabe* whether Miss Parnell wouldn't find it interesting? Try it and see," she advised, turning to me.

"Where could I have my garden?" I then wanted to know. Already I was full of enthusiasm.

"Down by the new house. We'll be there so soon now, that it wouldn't be worth while to start anything up here. We'll go to-morrow and pick out a place." Mrs. Martin was as eager as I about it, while Mr. Martin laughed at us both and said that he gave me until the first time I got thoroughly wet to change my mind.

"I shall work while the sun shines," I declared, piously.

"Then you'll be eaten alive by *plaga,*" he retorted.

Plaga is a sort of gnat whose sting makes little red spots all over one's hands, or wherever it bites. We are very little troubled by it up here, but further down it is a pest, and even at this altitude it is bad where there is much vegetation.

But *plaga* or no *plaga,* wet or dry, I intend to have a garden. Mrs. Martin and I, and *all* the children went down this afternoon and picked out the ground, just below the new house, where I can get to it in two minutes after we move. I am writing by this

mail to New Orleans for seeds, and until they come, Mrs. Martin is going to let me borrow from her.

July 15th.

Mr. Martin went to Santa Marta two days ago, and on his return, he brought Mr. Anson with him. When I saw Mr. Anson I rather looked for Kent, also; but the latter, it seems, has gone to Barranquilla for a short time, on business.

Our guest stayed only a few hours, as he was going to spend the night on another plantation; but before he left he admitted that, for once, something entertaining has occurred in the dull little town on the coast. Both he and Mr. Martin were full of the story when they rode up to the house yesterday just at noon, and they spent the greater part of the breakfast hour in telling it, with laughter and shouts of reminiscence, to Mrs. Martin and me.

"We had been playing billiards all the evening," Mr. Martin said, "until about eleven o'clock, when we went to bed. I'd been asleep about an hour when I woke up, suddenly, and heard loud voices out in the street."

"Loud! Rather!" emphasized Mr. Anson. "They would have wakened the dead!"

"Well, I jumped up and went out onto the balcony to see what the matter was, and an instant later Anson hurried out after me, from his room."

"In my pajamas," supplied Mr. Anson, smiling broadly.

"Both of us in our pajamas," supplemented Mr. Martin, grinning.

"We leaned over the railing of the balcony," Mr. Martin went on; "and down there in the street were four men — three patrols, and one of the German officers from the steamer. Those little boy soldiers had the officer by the arm, and they were trying to drag him over to the barracks, while he was trying his best to get away. The German evidently didn't know a word of Spanish, and certainly the patrols didn't know any German or English, yet they were hurling defiance at one another at the top of their lungs."

"They were too excited to notice us," Mr. Anson chuckled, "till I called down to them, 'I say! What's the trouble?' Then they

looked up, and — what absurd thing was it the big Dutchman said to us, Martin?"

"'For God's sake, can't you make these savages understand who I am?'"

"Oh, yes; exactly. And you said, 'Certainly,' as affably as if he'd asked you for a match!

"Well, we called down to the patrols, 'Hi, there! Your prisoner's a German officer, and you'd better be careful how you interfere with him.' And they sputtered back that they didn't care who he was; that he ought not to be in the streets at that time of night without a passport."

"Wasn't it then that Hunter and Cunningham came out?" interrupted Mr. Martin.

"Exactly," said Mr. Anson. "They came out on their balcony next door, and called out to us, 'What's the row?'

"We began to tell them, but as soon as the German officer saw them, he broke in, praying them to do something for him — in heaven's name to do *something!*"

"We could see Cunningham grinning." Mr. Martin took up the story; but he leaned over his balcony and suggested a compromise.

" ' You'd better offer to pay a fine,' he advised. ' That will probably satisfy 'em.'

" 'Fine!' roared the German — he was wild with rage — ' They've already taken everything I have, down to my penknife, and they're *not* satisfied. They want to put me into their barracks for the night.' "

" Oh! Wasn't he furious?" recalled Mr. Anson, with relish.

" Rabid. But no wonder. He calmed down a little, though, and said. ' I insist upon seeing the mayor.'

" ' The Alcalde's either asleep at this time of night, or else he's amusing himself,' Cunningham told him. ' In either case he wouldn't trouble about you until morning.'— Then what happened, Anson?"

" Oh, then the patrols cut it short, and began to drag the officer away. Do you remember how he shook 'em?"

" Don't I? Exactly as a big dog would shake three little ones. But they were three to one, and they held on. Off they went, the officer making remarks that sounded anything but pious.

" Then Hunter said, ' I say! It's awfully funny, but it's a jolly outrage, you know.'

"'Let's go over and rout out the Comandante,' Cunningham suggested.

"'He's as bad as the rest of 'em,' we told him, and Cunningham said, 'Oh, of course; but he might not care about having it known.'

"Well,— of course Hunter and Cunningham were in their pajamas, exactly as we were —"

Our story-tellers stopped to laugh and choke; but Mrs. Martin and I would have none of it.

"Never mind," we said, hastily. "Never mind. What did you do?"

"We went after them," gurgled Mr. Anson. "The four of us! All in pajamas! Full moonlight! Everything as bright as day! Oh! —"

"Just at the door of the barracks we caught up with them," Mr. Martin managed to go on, "and we all went in together. The anteroom was lighted, but there was no one there.

"'Call your Comandante,' Cunningham said to the three patrols.

"'He's asleep,' they objected.

"'Wake him up,' Anson ordered.

"One of the boys went out, and we heard

sounds of knocking on a door opening off the *patio*. In a minute or two the Comandante came in — of course in sleeping costume. Then we had pink pajamas and light blue pajamas and pale grey pajamas — I forget the two other colors, but they were there, and altogether it was a very pretty assortment. The Comandante was still half asleep; the officer was almost choking with fury; the boy patrols looked uneasy. As for us — our idea was to appear stern and uncompromising, but the effect would have been better if we'd had time to smooth our hair."

At this, it was I who interrupted the story. I pictured Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Hunter, both Englishmen, both most conventional and proper, in a court room at midnight, arrayed in pajamas of variegated pastel shades, countenances solemn and judicial, but hair in the disorder of their pillows. For the first time in my life I laughed till I cried. Only my burning desire to hear the end of the tale finally stopped me.

"There isn't much more," Mr. Anson said, "but I'll tell that, because it was Martin who did it. Well, as we told you, the Comandante came in. He bowed as if he

were in ordinary evening clothes, and he said, '*Buenos noches,*' as if the time had been nine o'clock instead of nearly one.

"We all said, '*Buenos noches,*' very politely, but then Martin took things into his own hands.

"'Look here,' he said, addressing the Comandante with great dignity, while he waved a pale-blue arm towards the three little patrols; — 'your men have arrested a foreign officer.'

"The officer, by the way, was in full uniform, and by contrast with the rest of us he looked an emperor at the very least. Also, he was still muttering terrible things in his own language. The Comandante looked at him and began to wake up.

"'I,' he stammered; — 'we have our orders.' This idea seemed to give him confidence. 'The Señor was in the street after the hour of nine, without a passport. He will be detained here until morning, when he will be taken before the Alcalde.'

"I saw Martin's eyes begin to get glittery. — Yes they were —" he insisted, at Mr. Martin's protest. "I didn't know what you might be going to do next."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Martin. "There was only one thing to do."

"What?" Mrs. Martin and I demanded.

"Tell that rascal to make his young thieves give back everything they'd taken from the officer's pockets."

"You gave the Comandante orders as to what he should say to his own men?" I asked, interestedly.

"Why not?"

"Did the Comandante do what you told him?"

"Of course he did," Mr. Anson answered the question. "He even put on an air of being shocked and scandalized, though we knew very well he would have shared in the loot. Then he began to babble something about a passport, again, and the Alcalde, and a fine; but Martin cut him short.

"'You will be kind enough,' Martin said to the German officer, 'to pay a fine of two dollars. That lets you out of any possible complication. For the rest, I take all the responsibility.'"

(Mrs. Martin beamed at her husband, approvingly.)

"Well; the officer paid the fine, and for the first time stopped swearing.

"Then Martin bowed ceremoniously to the Commandante, and the Comandante bowed to Martin. Everyone said, '*Buenos noches,*' with great courtesy, and then we five foreigners went out together — two Americans and two Englishmen, in pajamas, and one German officer in full uniform! Oh, my soul! It was funny!"

"Did anyone see you, in the streets?" Mrs. Martin and I asked, as we all laughed together.

"Not a soul. There was no one about. The officer went off, most thankfully, to his ship, and the rest of us went home to bed, nobody the wiser."

July 20th.

This is Independence Day in Colombia — the day corresponding to our Fourth. No one on the *finca* is paying the slightest attention to it (I doubt if one of the *mozos* knows what day it is), and I hardly think the occasion is being observed in Santa Marta. Last year I spent the Twentieth in Bogota, and owing to the revolution there was no celebra-

tion of any kind. There were exciting rumors, during the week or two preceding, that great political events were to take place on that day: Marin, the negro liberal general, proclaimed that he meant to spend the Twentieth in the national capital. But nothing happened, except that food became nearly as high as if there were an actual siege, and poor people starved. On the nineteenth, I remember, I went to see my dentist, who was an ardent liberal, and as I was leaving he told me to come in again the next day. "The Twentieth of July?" I reminded him. "You won't be in your office to-morrow, will you?" "To-morrow and *every* day till this government falls," he said fiercely. "We are not in peace and I feel very little like celebrating a holiday. Come to-morrow!" — I am so glad I was not born a Colombian.

It often frightens me to think how differently things might have turned out if some trifling incident had not happened to make them eventuate as they did. It is awesome to consider that one little step to the right or to the left, one decision made unthinkingly, even a chance action of some person, who, otherwise has nothing whatever to do with

one's life, may turn a scale in one direction or another, and bring about results the most stupendous. If I had not gone to just the *pension* in Switzerland that I did, I should not have met the Caravallos, and almost certainly should never have seen South America. Again, when I was in Barranquilla, expecting to take the next steamer for New York, it happened that that next steamer was the only one of the month which stopped at Kingston on the way up; for this reason every berth had been engaged before it reached Colombia, and there was no place for me. So then, when I found I should have to wait over another week if I sailed from Barranquilla, I decided, rather, to go to Santa Marta and take the banana boat from there; and the only reason that I did *not* leave on the banana boat was that I happened to say to El Señor Consul that I was longing to experience a coffee plantation. It is an old, old question, to what extent these things are arranged for us before we are born, and how much we, ourselves, have to do with them; yet, even where doctors have disagreed, I can not help turning my mind, modestly, to the question's consideration. Suppose I had not

gone to that *pension?* There were many, many others. Suppose it had been any one of the three steamers each month that do not stop at Kingston? Or suppose I had not mentioned coffee to El Señor Consul? All this has been brought to my mind by the thought of how very near I was to not having a garden. There was only my remark in regard to being an agriculturist: I might quite as easily have spoken of monkeys. I understand Maeterlinck to say that the future is just as much a fact as the past. In that case, the garden was just as much a fact two weeks ago as it is to-day. But if Mr. Martin had not suggested a garden? If I had not chanced to mention agriculture? —

The next morning after Mrs. Martin and I went down the hill and picked out the piece of ground, Mr. Martin let me have Francisco, and for nine days after that, excluding Sundays, I paid the man fifteen Colombian paper dollars a day to work for me. The result is satisfactory in the superlative degree. I have a kitchen garden of ten beds, each about twenty-five feet long by four wide, the whole enclosed by a wire fence against Mrs. Martin's chickens. In the beds I have

sowed seeds of beans, peas, beets, cabbages, and white and red Bermuda onions. Also, I have filled one bed with slips from La Niña Eva's tomato plants. Now I am impatiently waiting for the seeds to show above ground, and full of envy of Jonah, whose gourd came up in a single night. In the meantime I have ordered four barrels of potatoes from the States; when they come they are to be planted off in one of the clearings, as there is not enough vacant land by the house.

I shall be so glad when we are in the new house and near my garden; now I have half an hour's climbing to do every time I plant a bean. *La Casa Nueva* is getting on finely, and we expect to move in about the first of August. The outside framework of the house is nearly "mudded up"; the cement floors are being made on the rooms of the lower story, and the roof is shingled. We are going to have ceilings, so there will be no more rats dropping onto my bed from the rafters.

Almost every part of the new house has been made here on the plantation. The shingles are split from the wood of trees cut in our own forests; the doors and win-

dow-frames are made by our carpenters; all the planks for the flooring of the rooms upstairs are sawed out here, and even the bricks for the chimney and the fireplace are of home manufacture. Really, the only things that I can think of at this moment that are imported are the glass for the window panes (no longer will the fog come rolling in, thick enough to be moulded into balls!), the cement for the lower rooms and the corridors; and the hinges, locks and window catches. We are even to have native-made furniture after the house is finished and the carpenters can turn their attention to tables and chairs.

The Sunday after we returned from "the Anson's *paranda*," Don Roberto came up to take me orchid hunting. This is not the part of Colombia for the best and rarest orchids, but there are some here in the forest that would be considered beautiful in the north, and I wanted to send them to my brother, at home. It was certainly good of me to do this, for I had the most awful experiences trying to bring a box of orchids and other tropical plants when I came from Bogota to the coast — so awful that I vowed,

then, never willingly to have anything to do with an orchid again. One of the men of our party brought a parrot and I brought orchids; it would be hard to say which gave the more trouble, but the parrot died first. If I ever have an enemy, I shall try to get him to travel for weeks, in war time, through the tropics, on mules and on boats and on trains, with plants that must be watered, and must not be too wet, and can not be put in the sun, when there isn't any shade. I can see that box of orchids, now, falling off the mule's back with the rest of the cargo, the mule rolling over and over and kicking everything to pieces; Mr. Adams shouting at the *arriero* to put that small box under the suit case so that the sun would not shine on it; and the *arriero* swearing at the mule and the orchids and the parrot and us, impartially. "*Mula sin verguenza!*" (Mule without shame) he would shout, wrathfully, and the shameless mule would scramble to its feet, have its eyes blindfolded, meekly allow itself to be re-cargoed, and promise to be good till the next time.

But that was six months ago, and so much has happened in the meantime that I have

become soothed and calm on the orchid subject, and when Don Roberto said he knew where there were very fine ones, I somehow felt entirely willing to go and get them.

We rode mules, of course, and we went across the valley in a cut through the forest that is seldom used, and in most places, is no more than a trail. In one spot, however, it broadens out to a width of about six feet, and it was there that we saw the snake. Such a snake! More than a snake; it was a boa constrictor. I was riding ahead, when, as I say, the trail opened out, and across it, exactly in front of me, almost under my mule's forefeet, was slowly gliding an enormous serpent. I was so startled that it may have appeared to me much larger and longer than it was, but Don Roberto, who hastily rode to my side when I stopped and cried out, says it really was a monster and one of the largest snakes ever seen in the Sierra Nevadas. When we first saw it in front of us, its head was already out of sight in the forest on one side of the trail, and as we stopped there and watched it ripple across the path, it seemed minutes, and surely was a great many seconds, before its tail emerged

from the fern on the other side and finally disappeared. When I was in Bogota, an Indian hunter came to the Caravallos' house one day with what I thought was a great roll of matting. It was about one yard wide, and there was such a bundle of it that, as the man held it under his arm, it reached from his armpit to his fingers. He put it down on the corridor and unrolled it away from him as a salesman exhibits a piece of carpet, and then I saw, to my wonder and delight, that it was a dried snake skin — a yard wide, as I have said, and quite twenty feet long. The man had brought it for me to buy, but it was so enormously bulky that I was afraid I should never be able to get it home, so I refused to take it, and have been sorry ever since. Of course our snake of Sunday was not as large as that, but it was quite the biggest one I ever saw alive, and I wish I could have had its skin. If Don Roberto had had a chance to get at its head he might have cut it off with his machete, but it was impossible to follow the thing into the forest, and to have slashed at its tail as it crossed the road would have been madness: — we should "have scotched the snake, not killed

it." So it is gone. It was really a beauty, and I am glad I saw it.

We went on, and got a great many orchids, though none that were like those I saw in the interior. As we rode, I told Don Roberto my plan for a garden. But I had hardly begun when he broke in,—

"But, Señorita" (he always calls me Señorita, rolling the r like a Spaniard, while the rest of his speech is so very English that the combination is fascinating). "But, Señorita — seeds, even in the tropics, require time to grow, don't you know."

"Dear me, yes; I know that well enough," I complained. "I'm in such a hurry for them to come up that I don't know how I'm ever going to wait."

"Quite so," he answered. Then a most un-English gleam came into his eyes, so that, in spite of myself, mine dropped. "But the question is, *are* you going to wait?" he asked, looking at me.

It is disconcerting and uncanny for a man to be two nationalities at once. Englishmen I know, and Colombians I know, but to find both in one person is more than a woman is prepared for.

I really had not considered the fact that in laying out a garden I was practically arranging a future of at least months in the Sierra Nevadas. When I came up here I quite thought that by autumn, if not sooner, I should have had enough of it. Yet it is now almost the first of August and I am placidly putting in cabbage seeds, which, as Don Roberto remarks, infer time, even in the tropics.

He was still looking, and waiting for an answer. "Nonsense! He is only a man," I said to myself, scornfully. Then, aloud,—

"Oh, I can always leave the garden and go home, you know."

This was intended to be cool and crushing, but I am afraid it was too evidently an afterthought to be effective. He is quite clever enough to have perceived that the leaving-it-and-going-home idea had but that moment occurred to me, and that what I was actually planning, even if I had not realized it, was to stay on at El Cafetal indefinitely.

But I fancy he saw that I did not quite like having someone else understand my actions better than I had understood them myself.

"Have you ever seen *panela* made?" he inquired, unexpectedly. "Or eaten it, hot and soft?"

"No," I said; "neither the one nor the other. We don't make *panela* at El Cafetal, you know."

"Will you and Mrs. Martin come down to 'Vista Linda' one day, soon, and watch the process?"

"I should be delighted."

"How do you get on with the rats?"

Decidedly, Latins have a nimbleness of speech that an Anglo-Saxon never possesses. I do not think Kent could change the subject three times in three minutes, though an American could do it better than an Englishman could. Fancy Harry Hunter, darting from one topic to another as a humming bird flashes from flower to flower! One can as easily picture an owl dancing a jig.

It was necessary to think hard and fast to keep up with Don Roberto's mental one-hundred-yard dashes, but I did it, and I liked doing it.

"I always sleep with only my nose outside the blankets," I said, now. "The rats run over the bed, and I wouldn't have one of

them touch my face for the world. Ugh! They are the one thing on the plantation that I don't like."

"You must have a cat," said Don Roberto. "In fact, a cat and two kittens."

"Why two kittens?" I asked.

"Because the cat that I am going to give you has two children who would not like to be separated from her," he answered, gravely, in the tone of one alluding to a widowed mother and her offspring.

Monday morning, appeared Don Roberto's house boy, with a basket.

"A *regalo* (present) for the Señorita," announced the boy, putting the basket into my hands.

"What in the world is this?" exclaimed Mrs. Martin.

"A cat and two kittens, of course," I said in a matter-of-fact tone, as I took off the cover.

Mrs. Martin stared at me, but instantly transferred her gaze, as out onto the floor walked a large gray cat, while a black kitten and a buff kitten tumbled after her.

Tied to the handle of the basket were two small envelopes, one addressed to Mrs. Mar-

tin and one to Miss Parnell. Inside of each was Don Roberto's card. Below the name he had written, "Wednesday from two until five," and across the top, "*Panela*"— as it might have been "Dancing," or "Bridge."

We laughed, Mrs. Martin and I, and at once sent back by the house boy our cards with "Acceptance," inscribed thereon.

Panela is the Colombian substitute for maple sugar, made from the sugar cane. On Wednesday Mrs. Martin and I rode down to "Vista Linda," and reviewed *panela*-making from start to finish, except the cutting of the cane, which had been done the day before. The cane, in great bundles, is carried on the backs of oxen to the grinding place (I cannot be technical) where it is crushed between rollers. The juice runs into tanks which are heated from below, and is boiled down until it is like molasses. It is then drawn off, allowed to cool and thicken a little, then poured into moulds about two inches deep, six long and four wide, where it hardens into cakes. When it is soft and warm it is the most delicious thing I ever ate, and hard and cold it is very like maple sugar. The natives eat quantities of it; so do the children;

and so does Mrs. Martin's governess. We have our coffee so early that by ten in the morning I am in a half-starved condition, from which only bread and *panela* can save me. If Mrs. Martin is in the storeroom, she deals out the life-giving food with generous hand. If she is not there, she gives me the key and I help myself. It may be from this circumstance that little Willie connects me, vaguely, with storeroom, key, and the dear-to-his-heart *panela*. At any rate, last Sunday morning he awoke very early, got out of bed before any one else was up, and went forth alone onto the corridor. After a bit, he naturally became hungry. His mother and father were still asleep, and I think he realized that if he wakened them he would be in danger of an ignominious putting back to bed. Then I must have come into his baby mind, for presently there was a thumping at one of my outside doors, and opening it, I beheld Willie, still in his little nightshirt, very dejected, and suffering the pangs of hunger. When I opened the door he brightened up, believing, I suppose, that relief was in sight.

"*Tia,*" (aunt) — as he calls me — "*pan,*

(bread) *panela.*" At the same time he clasped my hand to lead me to the storeroom.

"But, Willie," I said, "I can't give you bread and *panela.* It is all locked up."

"*Tia!*" he repeated emphatically, as if I could not have understood him—"*pan; panela. Venga!*" (come),—still dragging on my hand.

"But, Willie," I said again, "I *can't* give it to you, dear. I haven't any key."

With the word "key" it seemed that he began to grasp the situation.

"*No tiene llave?*" (You haven't the key?) he inquired, searchingly.

"No," I assured him, "I really haven't, Willie."

He released my hand, sighed heavily, then walked away, shaking his head. Until he was far down the corridor, I heard him saying, over and over, in the gloomiest of tones—"*Tiene llave, no; tiene llave, no.*" (She hasn't the key; she hasn't the key).

I thanked Don Roberto, on Wednesday, for the cat and the two kittens;—for the cat on account of the rats, and for the kittens on their own account. They are the dear-

est things! I have named them Claro and Oscuro, because one is light and the other dark. Nothing could be funnier than their antics together. Yesterday afternoon I sat on the corridor, watching them, and I laughed till I nearly cried. First, they both spied a bug in the grass, and both made graceful little springs for it. Then the bug must have moved — I couldn't see it — for the kittens drew back, startled. Next, they cautiously advanced, jumped towards the creature from opposite sides, missed it, but hit each other with a soft thud. At that they forgot the foreign enemy, and civil warfare began. Both crouched low, and each watched the other, warily. Suddenly they sprang together, rolling over and over as they met. Then they separated and were quiet for an instant. Claro pretended to be off guard; Oscuro eyed him, craftily. All at once Claro's paw went out, and swiftly cuffed Oscuro on the ear. Up jumped Oscuro and tore away, full speed, Claro after him. They raced over the grass till they reached a little chicken coop, now empty. Oscuro darted in behind the lattice; Claro stopped just outside, on guard. There were a few seconds

of suspense; then, without warning, Oscuro's paw flew out and hit Claro squarely on the nose. Followed a wild dash for the lattice by Claro, and a brilliant defence on the part of the besieged. Anon, Claro ceased hostilities, and turning his back upon his brother, began to lick his paws, and straighten his fur, ruffled by the fray. Oscuro lay low, but I could almost see him wink as he sat there and watched Claro and took note of the unwary attitude. If a truce had been tacitly agreed upon, Oscuro broke faith in a most disgraceful manner. For while Claro was making his toilet, unsuspectingly, and peace and quiet reigned — presto! — Oscuro was out from behind the lattice. Over rolled Claro, and on top of him the perfidious brother — over and over until both were tangled into one soft, struggling heap. At that I laughed aloud; the kittens jumped apart, drew back, and looked at me, alertly. Then, with a common impulse, they ran frantically away, across the grass, under the roses, and around the house, out of sight.

Another funny thing happened yesterday. I had washed my hair and then had gone out to let it dry in the sun, taking a book with

me. As I read, I suddenly felt, from behind, a twitch and a tug on the hair, but I thought it was one of the children and took no notice. Then there was a decided pull, and I turned quickly around to remonstrate and to catch the prankish one. But instead of the laughing child that I expected to see dodging away from me, there stood a little calf, looking at me with brown eyes full of wonder. It had evidently mistaken my hair for a bunch of hay.

July 29th, Sunday.

Yesterday morning Mrs. Martin and I worked from seven to eleven, planting out cabbages. I, personally, put into the ground, three hundred and five little cabbages that Mrs. Martin gave me from her garden, grown from seeds. These, of course, I did not put into the beds of my kitchen garden — there would not have been room — but in a clearing down below the banana trees. Then in the afternoon I went down the hill again, and sowed, in my garden, seeds of carrots, cauliflowers and cucumbers. (The beans and peas that I planted last week are already up.) I went to bed at eight o'clock and slept ten hours.

Everyone who has been here, lately, has chaffed me unmercifully about my vegetable raising. They offer me magnifying glasses to see the little green shoots above the ground; they prophesy that my returns from the potatoes will be empty barrels, and they advise me that salt does not grow at this altitude. Mr. Cunningham rode over the other day, announcing that he had come for fresh vegetables, and that he wished to file his order, now, for all the potatoes that I shall have. The other night, while we were at dinner, Juana came up from Santa Marta, bringing a letter from Mr. Martin's agent, saying that the four barrels of potatoes have been ordered from New York. Mr. Martin glanced at the note and handed it to me, without comment. I read it and passed it on to Mrs. Martin, who said, cordially, "Well! so your potatoes are really on the way." The disagreeable Englishman was dining with us that night, and at Mrs. Martin's remark he said to me, sarcastically, "I suppose you expect to make your everlasting fortune."

I was trying to think of something to say, when Mr. Martin looked up from his *dulce* and said, quietly, "Those potatoes are mine."

Everyone stared at him. "What?" said the disagreeable Englishman.

"*Those — potatoes — are — mine,*" repeated Mr. Martin, just as quietly, but with an emphasis that could be felt.

Not another word was spoken on the subject: none was needed. Mr. Martin had made it perfectly understood that any further remarks about potatoes could be sent to his address. As Jean Ingelow says, "Some men are such gentlemen."

August 8th, Wednesday.
La Casa Nueva.

We moved last Saturday. Kent was here to help us, and he is with us still. He arrived Saturday morning in the midst of the confusion, and as of course he had not known that we were going into the new house that day, he thought at first, as he rode up, that we were having another fire. Harry Hunter came over with Kent from "La Ventura," to show him the way, so we had still another assistant in our change of residence; but Mr. Hunter went back the same afternoon.

Never was such a moving! Every single thing had to be carried by hand down four

hundred feet of steepness. It was fortunate that there were so many hands, for all was to be under cover before the rain. The scene on the side of the mountain, between the old house and the new, looked like a colony of ants, laden with spoil, running busily to and fro from one ant hill to another. There were Mr. Martin, Kent, Harry Hunter, Don Pepe, Mrs. Martin, all the children who can walk or toddle, myself, all the house servants, and one or two men from the *ranchos*. It was up, up, up, and down, down, down, like the King of France and his ten thousand men. "And when we were only half way up, we were neither up nor down." By noon it was all over; breakfast was cooked in the new kitchen, and eaten in the dining-room of *la casa nueva*. There were no carpets to lay down; things were simply put into their appropriate spaces and corners, and all was done. As the rain came on, and the afternoon grew cool, we lighted a fire in the new fireplace; and when we saw that the chimney absolutely did not smoke, we felt, for the moment, that there was nothing more to wish for. Of course, as we are human beings, very much alive, and healthily progressive, we are,

now, two days later, happily dissatisfied again. We want new furniture of all kinds; some sort of decoration — paper or otherwise — for inside walls and ceilings; Mr. Martin desires a ridge-pole, and Mrs. Martin and I are eager to paint the fireplace. But these things will arrive in time, and in the meanwhile we are in the house whose building we have watched so long and so interestedly — *La Casa Nueva!* Everything is convenient and comfortable, and we have a fine sense of space and expansion. It seems odd to go upstairs again, after having lived entirely on one floor. My new room is in the second story, and I consider it the best room in the house, as its window is to the view, the west, and the sunset. There are two bedrooms upstairs, besides a large space which we use for storage. Downstairs we have a *sala,* a dining-room, a square hall, three bedrooms, an office and a beautiful *despensa* (storeroom) which is the joy of the housewife's heart. Apart from the main house, but connected by a roofed corridor, are the kitchen and the servants' quarters, and a bath house, in which is a large, cemented, brick tank. Water is led into this from a spring which flows down the hill, run-

ning through the sun, so that by ten o-clock in the morning it is warmed to just the right temperature to make bathing delicious. A little distance from these buildings is a chicken house and run. To the right of the house is Mrs. Martin's garden (mine is below, down a little declivity); beyond that the store — quite a sizable building, with several rooms in it — and, further off, the stable, as it is called, but which is no more than a very large, open shed, where the mules may be sheltered when they are not in the fields.

The store is quite an important factor in the life of the plantation. It is always spoken of by its English name — I do not know why. We call the sitting-room, the *sala;* the store-room, the *despensa;* muleteers, *arrieros;* the plantation a *finca* or an *hacienda,* and so on; but the store is always the store — it is not even a shop. Everything that the *mozos* and their families need to eat or to wear or to keep house with is sold in the store, and every day at five o'clock, when the gong is sounded for them to stop work, the people come in numbers to buy. The selling, or broadly, the attending to their wants, is called " despatching "— a Spanish word, Anglicised. Don

Pepe usually "despatches," but some times Mrs. Martin does it, and then I find it most interesting to go down and sit on a barrel-end, and watch the scene. It is generally the men who come to buy, but often women come, too, and sometimes little children. They gather in front of the counter, laughing and joking, and one by one they are "despatched." The great staples of purchase are *arroz* and *manteca* (rice and lard) without which, cooked together, they would not believe that they could live a day. I always think of the nonsense rhyme,—

"IT IS CHEAP BY THE TON,
AND IT NOURISHES ONE,
AND THAT'S THE MAIN OBJECT OF FOOD."

But also they go away from the store with calico, matches, machetes, *platanos* (plantains), *melangas* (the Colombian substitute for potatoes), *panela* — all manner of things in the ubiquitous *mochila* (bag) over their shoulders. The sun is just setting as they leave for their *ranchos,* and the long light falls on pictures worth seeing, of scattering groups of dusky faces, bright eyes, dark, tumbled

hair, and lithe, erect bodies, quite untired from the day's work. They separate to their huts and their evening meal, and to such family life as is possible to the conditions in which they live — conditions which shocked me dreadfully when I first came up here, but to which I am now entirely habituated, if not reconciled. One can never be sure, in making a morning call at any one of the ranchos, exactly what combination of master and mistress will present itself; it is not by any means certain that it will be the same couple whom one saw there together the day before. The man may be the stranger, or it may be the woman, but a change in one or the other is not at all unusual. When I first knew of this state of affairs, it seemed to me that something ought to be done about it, and I ventured to say so. Then I was told the story of Mrs. Warner's marriages, and I made no further suggestions. It seems that some years ago there was, on one of the *fincas,* a manager named Warner, whose wife was the daughter of an English clergyman. Mrs. Warner came straight from the rectory to the Sierra Nevadas, and her consternation at what she found may be easily imagined.

She cried, and was homesick, and said it was a heathen country, and that she could never live here, but that if she did live here, she would, at least, put a stop to the unwedded life in the *ranchos*. She talked about the poor savages' ignorance of their moral obligations, and said that they only needed some one to teach them, and that, once instructed, they would gladly lead a better life. She sent down to Santa Marta for a priest and had him brought up on a mule. There was one whole day in which the people were gathered together and exhorted, and at the end of the services, all the couples, one after the other, were solemnly and legally married. The priest was then convoyed back to Santa Marta, and a great satisfaction and sense of duty well done filled the heart of Mrs. Warner.

Poor Mrs. Warner! She had done her best — at least she could comfort herself with that thought, and it is always a consolation. Comfort of some kind she certainly needed, for within a month from the day of the weddings there was not one single couple on the plantation that was composed of the same

man and woman whom the priest had united in holy matrimony.

"So you see," Mrs. Martin says, resignedly, "nothing can be done. And it seems to me better," she adds, most reasonably, "to let them live as they do, unmarried, than to marry them, knowing that they will be unfaithful to their vows in less than a month."

Mrs. Martin is one of the most reasonable women I have ever known; one of the few who can see a thing from another's standpoint. She is very even-tempered, and self-controlled in the best sense of that word, which does not in the least infer that she is not impulsive. How I dislike a person who is not impulsive!

The other afternoon, a day or two after Mrs. Martin and I had spent a long morning transplanting cabbages, Clara came running into the house, much excited, and calling out,

"Oh! What do you think Francisco has done?"

"What?" we demanded.

"Taken up all Mother's little cabbages and put them in Miss Parnell's garden!"

It was only too true. We can not make

out why he did it, but through some misunderstanding of orders, Francisco, the man who works for me, had carefully dug up nearly all the young cabbages that Mrs. Martin had so toilsomely put into the ground, and had replanted them in my garden. It was enough to have made a sphinx tear its hair, for not only had all Mrs. Martin's labor gone for naught, but she had lost the cabbages, which would not bear transplanting a second time. La Niña Eva only laughed — just laughed and laughed till she could laugh no more.

Kent has been visiting the plantations in the other valley, and now, as I have said, he is here at El Cafetal. He is studying coffee at first hand, and though he affects a cool, dispassionate attitude in speaking on the subject, I can see that if he has not already a case of coffee fever, at least his pulse is rapid, and his temperature above normal. He goes out with Mr. Martin every morning and stays until breakfast time, watching the *mozos* at whatever they are doing. After breakfast, away the two go again, walking or riding over the *finca* until I am positive there is not an inch where a man or a mule can go that Kent has not seen. Already he knows so much more

about the plantation than I do that I feel as if he were the one who belongs here, and I the newcomer and outsider, and I don't know whether I like it or not. I suppose it is very strenuous and business-like, but I should think he need not spend *all* his time like that. Even after dinner Kent and Mr. Martin talk about "*hectares,*" and felling, and cleaning, and shade, and pulpers, and driers, until it is time to be asleep; in fact, Mrs. Martin and I go to our rooms and leave those two men still smoking and talking in the *sala,* and *quien sabe* at what hour they go to bed?

The only time that Kent has had for me was last Sunday afternoon — while Mr. Martin was taking his nap — and even then his thoughts were altogether on coffee. Between rains I took him down to my garden, and showed him everything, and told him about the potatoes, and all that I am planning to do. Remembering Don Roberto, I naturally expected Kent to ask me, eagerly, how long I intended to remain in Colombia; I even felt a trifle apprehensive as to what he would say on that subject. I need not have feared; we might just as well have been speaking of Mrs. Martin's garden. At first, indeed,

Kent did seem interested; — he asked me so particularly just when I had put in the seeds, and how long they had been in coming up. I told him, and he gave my answers such careful attention that I felt quite flattered, and touched. But when I had finished, and he had the data all in his mind, he said, slowly and thoughtfully,—

"Yes; it's awfully good soil. Seeds don't come up like that at home. Coffee certainly ought to do well here."

Then we went back to the house, and found Mr. Martin awake, and it needed only the word "soil" to start them off again on one of their discussions.

"Twenty-five thousand up to January of next year, you said, I think?" This was from Kent.

"Yes; twenty-five thousand, total cost of making the plantation. But I have got back in crops five thousand, so am out of pocket, up to that date, twenty thousand dollars."

"Then what about next year's crop?"

"Fifteen thousand dollars. Eight thousand of that will go for running the place, making the estate stand, at the end of next

year, at a cost of thirteen thousand dollars. The same returns for the following year will bring it down to six thousand."

"And the year after that I understand that the coffee will be in full production. How many bags did you say?"

"Twenty-five hundred; which would mean thirty thousand dollars at the low price of to-day."

"And the expenses of that year?"

"Ten thousand dollars."

"Twenty thousand net. That's fourteen thousand to the good. And an estate worth one hundred thousand, you estimate?"

"One hundred thousand; yes."

"By Jove! cried Kent, his eyes shining. "Then look here —"

"Will you have a cup of tea?" I asked, meekly. (Mrs. Martin always leaves afternoon tea to me, because I like to make it, and she doesn't.)

"We were speaking of coffee —" said Kent, smiling, as I handed him his cup.

"Oh, really?" I interpolated.

"— But at five o'clock I suppose it *is* time to change the subject."

August 11th.

Kent has gone, but Mr. and Mrs. British Consul are now staying with us. They came yesterday afternoon, accompanied by Don Roberto, whom they have been visiting for a short time. We had a jolly tea, and then, as Kent is to stop at "Vista Linda" for a few days, and see that plantation before he returns to Santa Marta, he and Don Roberto went away together.

I have noticed a very curious thing in regard to those two men: — Kent's Americanism seems to blot out all the English in Don Roberto, and leave the latter pure Colombian. When Don Roberto is alone, if I do not consider his eyes, and if he does not say Señorita, he seems to me to be as thoroughly an Englishman as Mr. British Consul is; but when he is with Kent, in some mysterious fashion the English drops away from him — melts, dissolves, vanishes — until there is no trace of it left, and I wonder that I ever thought him anything but a Spaniard. It is like one of those experiments that we used to do at school. There was a glass jar full of some reddish-yellow liquid; the professor poured into it a drop or two of

blue stuff, and instantly the red disappeared, leaving a pure amber. I have always disliked chemistry, but with characters in the crucible, instead of atoms, it is a more interesting science.

August 15th.

MY potatoes were brought up from Santa Marta day before yesterday. *La casa nueva* is much nearer the road than the old house was, and we now know, both by sight and by sound, when the *arrieros* and the mules are coming, at least minutes before they reach the store, where the mules are always unloaded. Far away, winding in and out as the trail bends and curves, we see the line of laden mules, and, presently, the long, peculiar cry of the *arrieros* reaches our ears. The children have known that my potatoes were coming and have been on the watch for them, so, when the little caravan was sighted, there was a shout of *"Ahi viene las papas! Ahi viene las papas!"* (here come the potatoes) and Willie came running to me with the news — *"Tia — papas! Tia — papas!"* Yesterday fourteen men were planting, and last night the potatoes were all in the ground.

The planting cost me two hundred and fifty-nine dollars in Colombian paper — about five dollars gold.

I have every reason to believe that the situation of my future potato crop was once that of Indian dwellings. One small, level spot, in particular, was evidently a site of some importance. At one side or edge of this space, just where the ground begins to slope steeply away, there are two monoliths, about ten feet high, standing eight feet apart, and from them, leading down the slope, is a particularly broad and well-made stone stairway. The steps thus lead directly down from the stone pillars, and Mrs. Martin and I firmly believe that the latter were once the side posts of a great gate or doorway — probably the entrance to the abode of a mighty chief.

Just here, in digging holes for the potatoes, the men found two knives, each about a foot long; one curved at the end, something like a pruning knife, and the other straight. They are both so encrusted with rust as to be at least twice their original thickness, and they are very heavy. Mr. British Consul was much interested in the find.

"Spanish, of course," he said, taking the knives in his hands and turning them this way and that. "I wonder if the old Spaniards themselves got this far up the valley, or if the Indians went down to Santa Marta and traded with the white men, and then brought the knives up here to their homes. Either way, the things have been under your potato patch, Miss Parnell, for over three hundred and fifty years; long enough for the forest to grow up, above them, and flourish for centuries before Mr. Martin cut it down to make his clearings. How I'd like to know the personal history of these knives," he went on musingly. "They must have been a great wonder to the red men when they were first brought up here, and I daresay they were the chiefest treasures of the lucky Indian who owned them. Perhaps he was murdered on their account by some envious brave who took that way to get possession of them. They didn't happen to find a human skull near the knives, did they?"

"I don't think they found any skull," I answered, laughing.

"*Caramba!* Yes, they did," broke in Mr. Martin. "I brought it home, but I

forgot to give it to you." He put his hand into the large pocket of his field jacket, took out a veritable skull, and tendered it to me, his eyes twinkling.

"But that is a child's skull," I said, holding it, gingerly;—"just a baby's."

Mr. Martin smiled, and so did Mr. British Consul.

"Is that the first one you've seen, Miss Parnell?" asked Mr. Martin.

"The first what?" I said, puzzled.

"The first skull of a monkey."

"Monkey!"

"Certainly. That is a monkey's skull; it does look human, doesn't it?"

It did indeed. "Just fancy," I said, "that was once the head of a live monkey. I wonder if he lived here in the days of the Indians."

"Oh, by the way," Mr. British Consul was reminded; "What about that murder? In view of the evidence just presented I incline to the opinion that the great Chief who possessed the knives of the Pale-face was *not* murdered, but that his life was saved through a timely warning given him by the excited chattering of his favorite monkey."

"The monkey himself was killed," I suggested, holding up the skull.

"Certainly," concurred Mr. British Consul, gravely. "The monkey was poisoned by the baffled assassin; but he died happy in the consciousness of having done his duty."

I took the old knives up to my room when I went to bed, and my last waking thought was that I wished they could speak and tell me what Mr. British Consul calls their personal history. I went to sleep, and slept long and soundly, but as it was getting on towards morning, I suddenly heard the queerest noise — a rattling, clanking, metallic sort of noise — and instantly I opened my eyes. The room was full of moonlight — tropical monlight — and every object was clear and distinct. I saw the two old Spanish knives, but not quite where I had left them, and they were not alone — somehow their resurrection of yesterday had become known, for while I had slept, quite a gathering of their friends had come to greet them. There were an old flint-lock gun, a modern rifle, a revolver and an Indian arrow-head, besides a number of knives of various kinds. These last were, of course, the immediate

relatives of the Spanish knives, and, with them, formed, as it were, a little group apart. They were talking excitedly, and once I saw one of the Spanish knives point quickly to the monkey's skull which lay on the shelf above them. I would have given anything to have been able to hear what was being said, for of course I knew that it must be the story of the attempted murder. What light the narrative, told by the knife itself, undoubtedly an eye witness, would have thrown on the life, customs and history of those days! Just what Mr. British Consul had wanted so much to know. Just what Mrs. Martin and I had so often wondered and talked about, when we had tried to get Mr. Martin to excavate on the sites of the Indian villages. But, most unfortunately, the knives were too far from where I lay for me to distinguish more than a word or two, here and there, and even what I could hear was spoken in such a quaint old Spanish, as it might have been the Spanish of Cervantes, that I could not understand. I reluctantly turned my attention to the other group, nearer to me; they were talking more loudly — in fact, in the high, quick tones of disputation.

"I suppose"— it was the modern rifle that was speaking —"I suppose you rather pride yourself upon your ancestry, do you not, Mr. Flint-lock?"

"I certainly do," answered the Flint-lock. "I have every reason to do so; I belong to a good old Revolutionary family."

The revolver, which was standing near, cocked its trigger at this, and spoke in a sharp, metallic voice.

"For my part," it said, "I believe in a nobility of deeds, rather than of years, and that of deeds performed by one's self, and not by one's grandfather. Give me actions; give me —"

At this, quite a furor arose among the weapons.

"And who are you?" asked the Indian arrow-head, pointedly. "What have *you* done, that you speak of deeds so confidently? Not one of us present but has seen more service, and taken part in more 'actions' than you ever dreamed of. And who is more likely to perform deeds of valor than a weapon with a record behind him, and a family reputation to sustain?"

"A nice reputation *your* family has, I

declare," sneered the revolver. "When one thinks of the massacres in which you have probably played a prominent part, and of the atrocities committed by your cousins, the tomahawk and the war club, it is enough to make a civilised, modern weapon feel rusty."

"Is it, indeed?" flung back the arrowhead. "Ah, no doubt 'atrocities' have always been strictly confined to the uncivilised nations. We have a monopoly of that sort of thing — of course. But, pardon me, Mr. Revolver, what was that little affair in which you were engaged a few years ago, near Paris? A duel, was it not? — or so called by your principal.—'Murder' was the word used by the boy's relatives, I believe. I may relate the incident? Our friends will care to hear it, I am sure. It was in a café, on the outskirts of the city. There was a game of cards — a professional player — a young boy just from home — the old story — we have all heard it. The boy was ruined, of course, and he accused the other of foul play. Everyone present knew he was right, and every man in the room tried to keep the young fellow from accepting the challenge thrown at him by the gambler. But it was all to no

purpose. In less than twenty minutes the boy was lying dead,— a bullet — from a revolver — through his heart."

There was a silence of a moment or two, then the revolver began to speak, sulkily.

"The affair has been very much misrepresented," he claimed. "The boy —"

It is dreadful to be such a sleepy-head as I am. I simply can not keep awake at night, no matter how exciting may be the occasion. Once I was visiting at a country house at home, and in the small hours I was awakened by hearing low voices outside my window. "Thieves!" I said to myself. "I must get up instantly and alarm the family." I turned over, the better to roll out of bed — and the next thing I knew the sun was shining in my room, and it was morning. Probably the voices were not those of burglars, as nothing had been taken; but if they had been it would have been just the same: I had fallen asleep in the very act of going to arouse the household.

Now, it may be believed that, interested as I was in listening to the stories of the weapons, I, nevertheless, dropped off to sleep in the midst of their quarrel. When I awoke

again, they were gone. Only the Spanish knives remained, and they were looking drowsy, as well they might.

. . . . . .

We have been talking about folk-lore, a subject in which Mr. British Consul is absorbingly interested. Every evening after dinner is over, our house servants dispose themselves on the kitchen corridor, and there, until bedtime, they gossip and tell stories. Some of them are very good story-tellers, as those usually are who depend for their mental entertainment upon the spoken rather than the written word; but the curious part of it all is that these legends which they recount, evening after evening, are precisely the stories that I listened to when I was a child — *precisely*. The first time that I heard these "*cuentos*" was one night when I had been in the mountains only a short while, before we came down to *la casa nueva*. I had something that I wanted to say to Clara, and seeking the child, I found her in the old kitchen, in the midst of a group of servants — all surrounding Felicia, and intently listening to her. It made me think, a little, of what I have read of the old "quarter" days in the south, when the

negroes gathered together to hear the plantation stories. I sat down, with Clara in my lap, and in the beginning was more interested in the scene and the story-teller than in what was being told. I listened, however, idly, and presently I heard — of course, in Spanish —

"And Brother Rabbit, he sat there, hiding under a tree. Then came along Mr. Lion, and he says, very loud and fierce, 'Is there anybody that will show me the way across this river?' Then Brother Fox came loping up, and he says —"

"Brother Fox!" "Brother Rabbit!" "Mr. Lion!" So these children of the tropics had their Uncle Remus stories! Well, that was not so very remarkable, perhaps; it is natural for people who live near to Mother Earth to consider the animals as members of their family, and to tell stories about them. But what followed was not so easy to explain. Where did these South American natives get the notion of Cinderella and Goody Two Shoes, and Jack the Giant Killer, and even the old story of Hercules and his struggle with Antæus? Not one of these people can read a word, yet, from

the eldest to the youngest they all know the old stories, exactly as we have them. They say that the tales were told to them by their parents and their grandparents, but where did the parents and the grandparents get them? Never from books; we may be sure of that. Through the Spaniards? It is scarcely possible. I could hardly believe my ears when I heard from Juana and Felicia the familiar words in their unfamiliar Spanish; it gives one a queer sensation to listen to the fireside stories of home retold under the Southern Cross.

I happened to speak of this last night at dinner, and Mr. British Consul remarked that it would be possible to have the same sensation in many other parts of the earth.

"Comparative folk-lore is one of the most interesting subjects in the world," he began.

"Now you've started him," Mrs. British Consul stage-whispered. "*Quien sabe* when he will stop?"

"There are certain stories, as there are certain customs," went on the gentleman, "which are almost universally known. A comparison of the myths and legends of different countries shows us that there is a prim-

itive stage of culture through which all races pass, and in which they resemble one another. Folk stories are a survival of this period, which may be called the childhood of the world. When the Grimm brothers made their collection of fairy tales, they gathered from old libraries, from peasants' talk, from years of inquiry through many lands. Goody Two Shoes, Jack the Giant Killer, Red Riding Hood, Cinderella and other familiar tales were repeated to children before the English language was known."

"But who invented the myths, in the first place?" asked Mrs. Martin, out of the goodness of her heart.

Mr. British Consul fairly beamed. "They originated in various ways," he made haste to answer, delightedly. "Some of them are probably versions of the Scripture narratives; some have an historical origin, as when real persons have been deified after their death; some are truths which were originally taught in the form of allegories, but which, later, came to be understood literally; and some are undoubtedly of physical origin — that is, the elements — fire, water, and so on — were objects of religious worship, and

the powers of nature came to be personified."

Mrs. British Consul sighed plaintively — I suppose she had heard it all so many times before. When Don Pepe — who understands English, though he does not speak it, and who had been listening interestedly to Mr. British Consul — now offered a remark, the lady turned to him with a relieved and cordial smile.

"Among the tribes of the interior of Colombia," said Don Pepe; "— tribes who have never known the white man — I have seen the Indian children playing the games of Europeans, such as ball, hide and seek, peg top, and cat's cradle."

Mr. British Consul seized upon this, eagerly.

"Oh, yes;" he attested; "I have no doubt of it. A collection of the toys and games of children, for centuries past, throws great light on the history of civilisation. Some games, as chess, for instance —"

He ceased abruptly; his face grew red; tears filled his eyes; he seemed about to choke.

"A-chu!" he sneezed violently. "*A-chu! A-chu.*"

"God bless you!" invoked Mrs. British Consul, laughing.

Now, only an enthusiast would have maintained his interest at such a moment as that. Still wiping his eyes, Mr. British Consul turned to his wife —

"Do you know why you said, 'God bless you?'" he demanded.

"Why did I say it?" returned Mrs. British Consul, surprised. "Why, everyone says it."

"But *why?*" insisted the man with a hobby.

"*Quien sabe?*" she answered, in the fashion of the country.

"Because," he informed her, desiring nothing better than to answer his own question; "because it was once supposed that he who sneezed was trying to cast out a devil by whom he was possessed, and the pious, 'God bless you!' meant —'May God help you in your effort!'"

Everyone laughed. And then again we laughed, as Mrs. British Consul said, feelingly,

"It is the only interesting thing I have ever known you to say on that subject."

August 17th.

The banana boat is in. We sighted it through the field glass, before it entered the Bay yesterday afternoon, and we can see it, now, lying at its dock in Santa Marta. Mr. and Mrs. British Consul went down this morning, to attend to correspondence, and the possible needs of an improbable arrival from any part of the British Empire. An *arriero* has just brought up our mail from the steamer, and with it a letter from Kent, who is now in Santa Marta, but who sends the astonishing news that he is going to Bogota.

He says—"I think I ought to visit the capital, and learn something of the interior of the country before I decide whether or not to invest in coffee land on the coast. Besides, I'd like to see a South American Republic during a revolution, and this is as good an opportunity as I'll ever have. If the rest of Colombia is as much like a comic opera as Santa Marta is, it would be a pity to miss any of it. *Hasta la vista.*—(until we meet again) *Estoy* (I am) off for Bogota!"

October 1st.

When one teaches all the morning, works in a garden every minute of the afternoon that it is not raining, and goes to bed soon after eight at night, I suppose the record of one's days does seem, to an outsider, to be rather a dull one. I am sure my friends at home believe that if I have not already turned into a cabbage, I shall do so before many more weks of this plantation existence have passed over my head. From their letters I can see that those who think I do not know any better than to lead such a life as this are pitying me, and that they who credit me with understanding what I am doing are censuring me for it. Every one writes me — "I should think you would die of the loneliness and quiet!" Loneliness? They do not realise how often — but I will speak of that later. Quiet? Which of them has been stung by a scorpion, and has barely escaped the bite of a tarantula, both in one day? None, I am positive. But to me these things have happened.

A scorpion is very like a lobster — a lobster reduced to a length of from one to

four inches. It stings with its tail, and at the moment of contact its victim is ready to believe that it is a lobster of full size and strength that has done the work. On the coast, where it is hot, the scorpion's sting often produces fever; but up here it is only — unpleasant.

One morning, as I was dressing, I put my arm into the sleeve of my waist, and instantly felt as if a large needle had been run full length into my shoulder. I tore off my waist, and a scorpion about an inch long dropped to the floor. I put my foot on it, and then I flew into Mrs. Martin's room.

"O-o-o!" I cried; "I have been stung by a scorpion!" Mrs. Martin quickly put ammonia on the spot, and then she brought me rum — a great deal of rum. "Drink it!" she commanded.

"All that?"

"Yes, yes! You won't feel it. Drink it at once!"

So I did. Fancy all that rum on an empty stomach! Mr. Martin says it was enough to have made him dizzy, but as La Niña Eva had promised, I did not feel the slightest ef-

fect from it. The rest of that day my arm was a little swollen and painful, and that was all.

Then, that very afternoon, I was almost bitten by a tarantula. I was sitting on a log back of the house, when suddenly I beheld the thing walking towards me. I had seen one before, but it was dead — the men had killed it in the woods, and Don Pepe had brought it in. I had thought, then, that if I should ever be in the path of a live one, I should be paralysed with fright, and so I was. If it had been running along the ground, I think it would not have been so fearsome, but its very deliberateness as it stalked towards me gave a menacing, sinister character to its approach that chilled my blood, and took from me all power to move. It stood so high above the ground, too — quite four inches, I should think — putting one of its black, hairy legs before the other, slowly, slowly, but always in my direction. I sat as if in a nightmare, seeing the creature drawing nearer and nearer, but absolutely unable to get up and run away. At last it was within three feet of me, and I had heard the natives say that tarantulas will sometimes make great

jumps to attack a person. It was now or never. I made a desperate effort, rose from the log, sprang to one side, and ran to the house. There I first sank weakly onto a chair, and then I made such a furor that the entire household gathered in alarm. When I explained, the excitement instantly faded away. Only a tarantula! One of the servants said, afterwards, that she had supposed, from my manner, that it had been a *tigre* (tiger). But it was the first tarantula I had ever seen alive — and it was coming towards me *so* slowly and *so* surely.— I have seen two others, since that day, and I have held my ground and thrown stones at them. This one, at least, will never frighten me again. We all went out, with sticks, between two of which we caught the tarantula as if in a pair of tongs, and it is now curled up in a bottle of alcohol.

These little incidents should convince the most sceptical that life at El Cafetal is not altogether monotonous. If nothing is actually happening at the moment, at least there are always possibilities, and one can never be sure what adventures the day is going to hold.

Now, as to the loneliness, I have only one remark to make, and that is, simply — that I am not lonely. Does it matter so much how *many* people there are? I have grown very fond of La Niña Eva, and of Mr. Martin and the children. Also, we have guests, even up here; never a week goes by that one does not come riding to our door, and often there are several. This, however, is equivocation; I suppose the real reason why I am not homesick is — Don Roberto. He is here very often, and he does not pretend that he comes for anything in the world but to see me. I do not know whether or not a man of his race can keep his feelings out of his eyes if he tries. Don Roberto does not try, and I see in those brown eyes of his that which makes me — well — contented in the wilderness.

Of course nothing could ever come of this; in race, religion and country we are too widely divided. He must realise it as well as I do, so that I do not feel guilty in letting matters drift on. He likes to come here, and to talk to me with the most expressive eyes I ever saw. I like to have him come, and I find the messages of the eyes very pleasant

ones. That is all — there can be no danger for either of us; and as the Latin race is proverbially a fickle one, he will probably be the first to stop caring.

In the meantime, I could not go home if I wished. The revolution has taken a fresh impulse, and conditions on the coast are chaotic in the extreme. The liberals seem to be winning; — they have just captured the entire navy of Colombia, a boat which was formerly the private yacht of one of our American millionaires. Of course, this is a great loss to the government; the more so as there is a rumor that the liberals are about to bombard Santa Marta. The Department of Coast Defence has been thrown into a great state of excitement — the coast defences being several old and very rusty cannon on the Morro. Long as these guns have been in position, it seems that the gunners have not yet learned how to handle them, for one of the foreign residents, who is something of a practical engineer, has been sent for in haste, and entreated by the distracted defenders to show them how to manage their artillery.

The liberals have burned bridges, and taken possession of the little railroad, and

have fought the government troops very near Santa Marta. An attack on that town is daily expected, and the approaches to all the streets are barricaded. The banana boats are not running, and no one knows when they will be. No bananas can be brought in from the plantations for shipment, so the agent of the United Fruit Company sent word by the last boat that was here that there would be no use in sending another until he let them know. As there are no steamers, of course there is no mail, coming or going. The only possible way to send letters is by some one who may be going to Barranquilla in a sail boat, and perhaps some mail will be brought over from there in the same way. There has been no regular communication with Barranquilla in three weeks.

No word has come from Kent since he started for Bogota, and as few, if any, Magdalena boats are running now, *quien sabe* when shall we hear from him? He should have reached the capital long before this if he found a steamer going up when he arrived at Baranquilla; but if the liberals hold the Magdalena, it may be months before he will be able to get down to the coast again.

This revolution is the most comical tragedy, and the most tragic comedy that it is possible to conceive, and no one *could* conceive it who has not lived in a South American Republic.

When Mr. Martin came in to breakfast, this noon, he changed his field jacket for a house one, as he always does, and hung the field jacket over a chair in his room. We had finished the meal, but were still sitting at the table, talking idly, when suddenly Mr. Martin exclaimed,

"*Caramba!* I almost forgot! Miss Parnell, will you go and put your hand into the pocket of my jacket, and see what you find?"

Of course I went. I put in my thumb, and pulled out — a tiny, wee potato.

"Oh!" I cried, in great excitement, running back into the dining-room. "Are they ripe?"

"Ripe," mocked Mr. Martin. "Whoever heard of a ripe potato? If you mean, are they large enough to be dug up? — no, they are not; they are small yet, like this one. But I think you may be able to pick them from the bushes by Thanksgiving if you have good luck."

He may laugh as much as he pleases; the potatoes are really coming on, and that is all I care. As for my kitchen garden, it is my joy and pride. Yesterday I picked the first beans. Putting up the poles for those beans was hard work. There were sixty of them, and I dug the holes and did everything myself; but yesterday's picking, and to-day's and the thought of all the pickings that are to come, very much more than compensate me. The beets and the onions are doing finely, and the cabbages are "heading up." Outside my wire fence I have put in one hundred and ninety-two tomato plants, and there are, already, quantities of little green tomatoes on them. These plants have to be tied up to stout sticks, and I have discovered that shreds of dry banana leaves make excellent strings, and do not rot in wet weather.

October 15th.

Coffee is such a pretty thing! — when it is growing, I mean. The trees are planted in rows — hundreds and thousands of rows. If they were let alone they would grow to about twenty feet in height; but they are kept down to about eight or ten feet so that the

berries can be more easily reached at picking time.

When I came to El Cafetal, last June, all the coffee berries were green; now many of them are dark red, like cherries, and the effect as they are seen against the glossy leaves of the trees, is very striking. It is not, however, the beauty of the berries that is their most important claim to our attention just now; it is the fact that when they are red they are ripe and ready to be picked. Already the harvesting has begun, but as the coffee does not all ripen at once, the gathering will go on from now until January. The berries are picked, one by one, by men, women and children, the last two entering into the work with the greatest gusto, as it is the opportunity of the year for them to earn something. All over the place, now, groups of *viejas, muchachas and niñas* (old women, young women and little girls) may be seen, harvesting busily, the while they laugh and gossip and appear to enjoy themselves. They make so light an affair of the picking that I thought it must be pleasant work, and that I would try it. I took a small pail and went gaily out to some trees near the house; but in about

half an hour I returned, hot, weary and greatly cast down, in that I had gathered during what seemed to me an eternity, and the pail was not yet full. I have decided that I would rather teach, or even put up poles for beans. A good picker harvests three bushels a day, and earns fifty cents; some gather as much as six bushels a day, but this is rare. One bushel of berries will give ten pounds of cleaned coffee. The beans must be pulped the same day that they are picked, or they will commence to ferment in the pulp, and stain the coffee. From the pulper the grains go into the fermenting tanks, where they are allowed to ferment from twenty-four to eighty hours, in order to take off a sweet, gummy substance which is on the hull. After the coffee is properly fermented, it is washed in several waters, and then laid out in the sun to dry. When it is dried, it has to be put through the huller, which takes off the silvery skin, and then, at last, the bean is as we see it in the market.

As we are so large a family, there are always freshly-washed clothes hanging out to dry, and as the coffee crop is constantly coming on, there is always some coffee spread

out in the sun. Every afternoon, therefore, when the rain begins, there are excited shouts of, "Bring in the clothes!" and "Take in the coffee!" and for a time, daily, we have scenes of the wildest hurry and confusion.

November 13th.

We are now in the worst of the rainy season, which becomes more and more severe as it draws towards its close. In less than a month, probably, the days will be all blue sky and sunshine, but at present even our brilliant forenoons have deserted us. By ten o'clock in the morning the clouds gather, and the fog rolls up the valley, blotting out even the nearest *rancho*. There is no riding forth on *paseos,* Sunday mornings; Mrs. Martin and I can not go out to dig for Indian treasure; it is scarcely possible for me to work in my garden. I can imagine that if we were now in the old house, where there was no glass in the windows, and the doors did not shut properly, everything would be very damp and shivery. This must be the weather to which El Señor Consul referred when he was trying to convince me that it would be folly to go into the mountains.

To me it seems incredible that any one can feel that happiness or unhappiness depends upon external circumstances. People who are glad or miserable, according as they are hot or cold, or wet or dry, or have the things they like to eat, or do not have them, either do not know — have never known — what happiness means, or else their time of felicity has gone by, and they are left to the dull common-places of mere physical being. To the former, I always greatly desire to reveal what they have been missing; for the latter I am afraid there is very little hope. If I am unhappy, I am unhappy, and the most paradisiacal outward conditions do not comfort me. On the other hand, if I am really happy, nor heat, nor cold, nor wet, nor drought has power to touch me. I knew, that day when El Señor Consul was talking to me, that all those things would make no difference. I might have been *muy infeliz* (very unhappy) up here, but it would not have been on account of the climate. As it is, I am contented, and to be contented means a great deal. It signifies that I am glad of each day, exactly as it comes, and that I

do not want anything to be other than just as it is.

As we can not go out, in these days, Don Roberto and I have endless conversations in front of the open fire in the *sala*. We talk of life in England, with which I have had no acquaintance, but that has furnished the conditions of Don Roberto's environment since he was a little boy; of life in the United States, a country that Don Roberto can never hear enough about, and concerning which he asks ten thousand questions; of Bogota, Don Roberto's birthplace, but which I know so very much better than he does; of Colombia in general, Santa Marta, the Sierra Nevadas, coffee. Then we roam over the world — its history, its literature, its ethics — until, with the tea cups, we usually begin to talk of ourselves.

Sometimes, after one of these long interchanges of thought, I wonder if, after all, differences in race and religion and country are as fundamental as I have believed them to be; or if, perhaps, back of them all, and beyond them all, the heart of a man is not the same the world over. And does anything else matter?

December 1st.

A week ago we were making modest preparations for a quiet little Thanksgiving dinner all by ourselves. The fatted turkey was ready to be offered up (that is, we were ready to offer him), and some of my new potatoes had been "picked from the bushes" to bear him company. Then, on the Tuesday before, to our great surprise, we received an invitation from the Ansons to spend the holiday with them at "Las Selvas," their place in the next valley. It seemed to us very odd that the Ansons should be going into the mountains in November, in the end of the rainy season, when in so short a time the weather will be perfect. If they wanted to celebrate Thanksgiving, why did they not do it in Santa Marta? Or if they desired a house party at "Las Selvas," why did they not wait until Christmas? Each one of us, including Don Roberto — who was here when Mrs. Anson's note was brought up, and who had received one just like it himself — asked these questions of each of the others, so that in all they were repeated twelve times. Then we all said to all the others, "*Quien sabe?*" and after that we decided to accept

the invitation first, and to trust that we might find out the reasons for it afterward. We were requested to arrive on Wednesday, and to remain until Thanksgiving afternoon, and we felt obliged to question one another again, all around, as to why we had not been asked to stay over until Friday.

Wednesday morning Mrs. Martin and I packed our *fiesta* (festival) clothes in bags and suit cases, and Mr. Martin inspected the straps and fastenings of the saddles and bridles of our mules, for he knew that the road to be gone over was a bad one. Don Roberto came about eleven o'clock, and at half past twelve, after an early and hasty breakfast, we four left El Cafetal. Each of us rode a mule; and another mule, in charge of an *arriero* on foot, carried our luggage.

The trail through the forest, over the mountains into the next valley, is an old Indian route, overgrown for centuries, and partially cut out only a few weeks ago; and it is the worst road I ever saw, except some few parts of the pass between Honda and Bogota. Again and again we had to get off our mules and let the animals pick their

way as best they could, while we did the same, on foot. Twenty times it seemed as if we must break our necks. We were tangled up in vines; we stumbled over logs; we went sliding down steep places, and crawling up the sides of almost perpendicular ones. Sometimes the trail was so narrow that it did not seem possible that a mule's four feet could all be on it at once, and then I hastily repeated to myself the saying that if a mule has only three feet over a precipice, with one on the firm earth, he will scramble back into the road. Many times the luggage had all to be taken off the cargo mule and carried across bad bits, piece by piece, on the *arriero's* back. Once or twice it really semed doubtful whether we should get through or not; but at last, just at sunset, we emerged from the forest and came out onto the edge of the "Las Selvas" clearing; two hundred thousand coffee trees were spread out before us, and we were within sight of the house. We all shouted at once, and Mr. Anson and Harry Hunter came running out to greet us.

Arrived at the house, we found all the rest of the foreign colony of the Sierra Nevadas and Santa Marta assembled, and there

were even a Mr. and Mrs. King, a clergyman and his wife, from Barranquilla. Really, it was awfully good of the Ansons — coming up at this season, and sacrificing themselves to make an American holiday.

"What *is* Thanksgiving?" Don Roberto had asked me on the way over, and the question had, for the time, spoiled my pleasure in the trip. My thoughts had gone back over the years, to all the Thanksgivings that I could remember, since I was so little that I had to be carried, sound asleep, from the table to my bed. These festivals are part of my life, and of the life of my forefathers, back to the days of the colonies, and they are significant of a great deal more than the mere holidays themselves. The fact that I have Thanksgiving days to remember means that I was born in a Thanksgiving land, of Thanksgiving ancestry, in a Thanksgiving atmosphere, as the day stands for a new world, a free people, and individuality of thought and conscience. What would it be to live the rest of my life with one to whom Thanksgiving had to be explained? It was only an instant that this was in my mind, but it sufficed to make me wish that Don

Roberto's native town were Boston instead of Bogota.

I forgot it during the evening. It was a cosmopolitan gathering, and there was very little in the atmosphere to remind me of the land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrims' pride. Every one talked coffee, just as usual; — that is, every one who was not talking bananas. I was intent upon Baby and Harry Hunter. They were not much together, but it seemed to me that there was something in their attitude to each other that had not been there last July; and once I saw an " understanding " look pass between them that made me feel certain that Harry had, so far, prospered in his wooing. No one else noticed it, I think; no one else, perhaps, was looking through the eyes of the heart, just then, as I was.

Before seven o'clock on Thursday — Thanksgiving — we were all up and out of doors. Such a morning! Brilliant, radiant sunshine — the air just warmly cool — it was like a perfect summer's day in the Adirondacks. It seemed as if the dry season had come on over night, for during all that holiday the sky was blue, and there was not a

cloud in the universe. "Queen's weather, by Jove!" said the Englishmen; but we Americans, remembering what day it was, exchanged glances, smilingly; *we* knew why the rainy season had unconditionally surrendered.

We had been told that the dinner was to be at twelve, as, in fact, it would need to be if we were all to return home that day. We had the morning coffee leisurely, then most of us went out again, and wandered about, viewing the plantation. The men got up some sports, running, jumping and shooting; and Mrs. British Consul and I, who had brought cameras, photographed every one several times over. About eleven we returned to the house to dress for dinner, and at half past eleven we were all assembled in our *fiesta* clothes out on the wide corridor. Baby and Harry Hunter were standing together, a little apart; I thought I had never seen her look so dear and sweet, nor Harry so earnest and manly. Presently Mr. King, the clergyman from Barranquilla, walked over towards the two; he stopped as he came to them; and then — could we believe our ears? —

"Dearly beloved"— the clergyman was saying — "we are gathered together here, in the sight of God, and in the face of this company, to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony."

There was the lightest, faintest sound, as if every one present had drawn a quick breath at the same moment; — then perfect silence, and the service went on.— "To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part."

When it came to, "I, Margaret, take thee, Henry," I looked around to see where "Margaret" was, before I realized that, of course, that must be Baby's name. Well; — as Mrs. Henry Hunter, "Baby" would no longer be a fitting appellative.

"Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.— I pronounce thee man and wife.— Amen."

So *this* was the reason! With every one talking and laughing at once, we somehow came to understand that an uncle of Harry's, over in England, had died. The uncle had not exactly left Harry a title and an enor-

mous fortune, as would have happened in "the old three-decker," but he *had* bequeathed to his nephew "a tidy little place in Surrey," as the young Englishman put it, and there remained nothing for the grateful legatee to do but to go home and live there. And Baby — I mean Margaret — who had not known her own mind as long as Harry was within a mule-ride of her, had arrived at the truth very promptly when he came to tell her that he was going thousands of miles away. The steamer that had come in from Barranquilla had brought the news to Harry; everything had been planned in a few hours; Baby had absolutely refused to be married in Santa Marta ("horrid, gossipy place!" she declared it), hence the hurried flitting to "Las Selvas." And as for the time set for the guests' departure, the hosts themselves were returning to Santa Marta immediately after the banquet, for Mr. and Mrs. Hunter were to sail away on the steamer that very evening.

Just at twelve we sat down to the Thanksgiving dinner, which had so suddenly become a wedding breakfast. It must have been about fifteen minutes later, I should think,

when suddenly there was a great clattering of hoofs, outside, then a quick step across the corridor; the door opened — and there was Kent. Such a day of exciting surprises! For the moment, the bride and groom were forgotten. We all jumped up and surrounded Kent, shaking hands, exclaiming and asking questions; but he laughingly waved us back to our seats, and made a place for himself at the table, saying comically, "*Tengo* (I have) hungry, *mucho* hungry!" We gave him, hastily, everything in sight, and then we demanded explanations. Where had he come from? How did he get here? Why hadn't he come before? Who had told him about the wedding? — for not a soul in Santa Marta had known of it.

With the quickness of light Kent stopped eating and looked around the table until his eyes met mine.

"What wedding?" he asked, keenly.

There was a chorus of shouts, but above it Mr. Anson finally succeeded in making himself heard.

"Mr. Winthrop," he said, rising from his seat, and bowing to Kent, and then towards

Baby and Harry; "I have the pleasure of introducing you to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Maxwell Hunter."

When Kent went around to their end of the table and offered his congratulations, he told Baby and Harry that he had never been more pleased in his life, and I believe that he spoke only the literal truth when he said it.

After that we heard his story. He had come down from Bogota and reached Barranquilla on Tuesday. To have come over to Santa Marta by the usual way he would have had to wait several days, so he had hired a covered canoe and had himself poled over through the *caños*.

"I was nearly eaten alive by mosquitoes," he told us, with a retrospective shudder. "Couldn't stay inside the covered part, because if I'd smoked in there I'd have choked, so I sat up in the open end all night, smoking to keep away what I could of the mosquitoes, and expecting every minute that I'd go to sleep and drop overboard, and be quietly swallowed by an alligator in the darkness. I got to Santa Marta this morning at seven o'clock, went right to Anson's, was told every-

body was up here, so I got a mule and came on."

"But what was your mad haste, my dear fellow, as you knew nothing of the wedding? Why didn't you wait and come over in the steamer? It would have been a matter of only a few days longer."

This was from Don Roberto. Kent looked at him in amazement. "A few days longer?" he repeated. "A few days longer! Why, I've moved heaven and earth since before I left Bogota to get here for Thanksgiving!"

As soon as dinner was over, every one began to make preparations for departure. I was ready before the others, and I went out onto the corridor to wait. In a moment or two I was joined by the disagreeable Englishman. He does not mean to be disagreeable; he was born so.

"Well, Miss Parnell," he said, "the wedding was quite a surprise, wasn't it?"

"It was, indeed," I agreed with him.

"But don't you think, really now, that international marriages are hazardous?"

"Not at all," I said, at once, combatively; "why should they be?"

"Think of the difference in associations and national traditions," he urged. "They'd always be coming up, I fancy, and keeping the two from entirely understanding each other, don't you know?"

How irritating of the man to voice what had always been exactly my own belief! Nothing in the world would have induced me to say that I thought as he did, so I was obliged to invent new opinions on the spot, and to turn all my mental cubby holes inside out in a hasty search for refuting arguments. It was fortunate that during the past few weeks I had really and honestly been giving the other side of the question a good deal of consideration, for thus I had something to start on.

"Such differences are entirely superficial," I began, assertively. "They could never affect the inner life of happily married persons. The really essential elements of sympathy between two people are far deeper than similarities of early environment. Below the unimportant externals, men and women are very much alike, whatever their race or country. I am sure you will admit that —"

"Señorita," interrupted Don Roberto,

courteously; "pardon me, but Mrs. Martin is enquiring for you, indoors."

"'For this relief much thanks,'" I murmured as I walked away from the disagreeable Englishman; but the next instant I had reason to change my mind.

"*I heard every word you said,*" Don Roberto exulted, the moment we were alone; "and I never knew anything so convincing in my life!"

Every one was ready to go. The Santa Marta people started away first, Baby riding by her husband's side, as though the two were already beginning life's journey together; then we, calling after the bride and groom good-byes and good wishes, turned our mules westward and came again across the mountain, back to our own valley.

December 5th.

Kent has come up to El Cafetal again, as it seems that, in spite of endless hours of conversation about coffee, he finds there are yet many aspects of that subject which he wishes to talk over with Mr. Martin. He has about decided to buy land somewhere in this region, and he is going on an explor-

ing expedition up the valley as soon as the dry season really sets in. One thing, at least, he has learned from the trip to Bogota, and that is, to make no investment away from the coast.

"At present," Kent says, "the situation of the coffee growers of the interior is one of the most disheartening I ever knew in my life. Think of having fine crops all harvested — thousands of bags ready for export — and absolutely no way of getting the stuff down to the coast. And it's now the third year of that sort of thing; every coffee man I met was on the verge of ruin, if he hadn't already gone under."

"The Magdalena boats seem to be running pretty regularly, now," remarked Mr. Martin.

"Yes, the government has given them over to the Company again, but the freight charges are enormous; they're trying to get back something of what they've lost by the war — making up for lost time. It costs about as much, now, to get coffee from the interior to New York as it brings when it reaches there. Until just lately the government has controlled all the transportation, and the con-

sequence has been that the coffee of particular friends of those in power has been forwarded and the rest has been put on one side. All the way between Bogota and Honda there is coffee that has been side-tracked for that of some partisan of the government, and in Honda, thousands and thousands of bags are stored. It's been lying there nobody knows how long, and the grains are all *blanqueado* (white). If it ever reaches the coast it won't be fit to export, so it's a dead loss, anyway. I met a man in Bogota — a Colombian — owner of a large plantation, who told me that he was actually thinking of offering the government half of his profits if it would guarantee him the safe shipment of his coffee to New York. A few foreigners are going down from Bogota to Honda with each mule cargo of their coffee. The government doesn't dare to interfere with them, or seize their mules, as it would those of a Colombian; but even then there are the passage down the river, and the freight to be considered. Really, it's a frightful condition of affairs. There are fine plantations, all through the interior, selling for one-tenth of what they'd be worth if the country were

in a settled state, and I saw some *haciendas* that have been entirely abandoned — the houses and crops and thousands of dollars' worth of machinery going to ruin."

"But you say you think the revolution has about played itself out —"

"Oh, yes; I don't see how it can possibly last any longer. The country is utterly exhausted in men, money, ships —" Kent laughed, for we have told him the story of the navy and the coast defenders.— "I really think it's about over. But that won't improve the coffee situation in the interior. The minute things are in anything like a normal condition again, and the road between Bogota and Honda isn't infested with guerrillas, and mules are more or less safe — there'll be such a rush of coffee to the coast that there won't be mules enough to carry it to Honda; the river boats will have more than they can handle, and they'll charge any price they like. And even after the congestion is over, and things are readjusted, who knows how long the country is going to be quiet? A new revolution may break out any minute, and then you have all the trouble begun again."

"*Gracias* (thanks) *á Dios,*" said Mr. Martin, "El Cafetal is where the coffee can be sent to the coast in five hours, on our own mules, revolution or no revolution!"

"*Quiero* (I want) an El Cafetal of my own," declared Kent.

His ear has become familiar with all sorts of Spanish words and phrases since he has been in Colombia, and he intersperses his conversation with them as the children do theirs with English, with the same quaint and comical results.

"There's such a lot of difference," Kent observes, "between learning a language in school, and learning it in the country where it's spoken. On the Magdalena I picked up the Spanish for alligator and monkey and heat and mosquito net, and I know how to tell an *arriero* to saddle my mule, and what "*Alto ahi! Quien vive?*" means. But if I wanted to say, I have the pen, thou hast the pen, he has the pen; or, Where is the book of your father's sister? I couldn't do it."

"That's just it," I said; "you'll never want to do it. Before I went to Europe, I had studied French, in school, for years, and I supposed I knew enough of it to get along

where French was spoken. Well, one day, when my aunt and I were in Geneva, we wanted to take a drive along the lake shore, and before we started I gave the direction to the coachman. We drove off, but in a few minutes we found that we were going straight back into the country, away from the lake as fast as possible. We stopped the driver, and I explained that we wanted to be near the water, to see the water, to enjoy the view of the water, and that we did not care to go into the country, back from the town, away from the water. The man seemed to understand me, and we drove on again, but in exactly the same direction as we had been going before. 'Tell him,' said my aunt, 'that we want to drive by the lake. Surely you must know the word for lake; you took the French prize in school one year, didn't you?' 'Yes,' I said, 'and of course I can say a simple thing like that. He is a dreadfully stupid man, that is all.' Then I called again to the driver, and I told him, very slowly and carefully, that we should be pleased if he would take us by the lake, along the lake, near the lake, around the lake, on the shore of the lake, over the lake

road, rather than that which led away from the lake, back from the lake, out of sight of the lake, into the country. It was all of no use. The man was attentive and courteous as possible, and he looked perfectly intelligent, but our drive that afternoon was quite apart from Lake Geneva. 'After all the money that was spent on your education!' my aunt said to me, reproachfully."

"If you had heard some one else, just then, give the directions for the drive you wanted to take," put in Don Roberto, "you would have known how to do it forever afterward. That's the way one really learns a language in a foreign country. When I was about seven years old, before I knew a single word of English, I was sent to a school in Devon. The first noon, at recess, I went out with the other boys into a garden to play, and we ran about till we were hot and thirsty. There was a pail of water on a bench, in charge of a boy who gave out a dipperful to any one who went up and asked for it. I was awfully thirsty, but I didn't know how to say that I wanted a drink, so I choked for a long time in silence. Finally I couldn't stand it any longer; I went over and stood

near that bench until at least a dozen boys had come up, and I'd heard what they said. Then I knew how to ask for a drink of water in English, and I never forgot it."

Last evening the most curious thing happened — something really uncanny. I have read of "thought transference" and "telepathy" and "simultaneous inspiration"; but I never really knew an instance until last night. We were all writing answers to some questions that Mrs. Martin has: questions such as "What do you most desire?" "What is your favorite color?" "Do you prefer prose or poetry?" Each one had a slip of paper, and as Mrs. Martin read the questions aloud we all wrote our answers, only half a minute being given for each question; then Mrs. Martin took the papers and read them for all to hear. The name of the writer of each slip was not given, but there were so few of us — Mr. and Mrs. Martin, Kent, Don Roberto and I — that it was not at all difficult to recognise each one. Among the other questions, one was, "What is your idea of happiness?" I wrote, hastily, what first came into my

head — "To be in a new land." Then, just as Mrs. Martin had collected the papers and was about to read them, the thought of Kent came to me — how or why I can not pretend to explain, but it came so insistently that I cried to Mrs. Martin, "Oh, wait! Please let me have my paper for a moment." She gave it back to me, and to what I had written, I added, "— with an old friend." Now, just as I asked for my paper again, Kent begged for his.— "Please let me have that a second," he said, "I've got something else that I want to put down." It appears almost incredible, but when the papers were read, in answer to "What is your idea of happiness?" — where I had written, "To be in a new land — with an old friend," Kent had said, "To be with an old friend — in a new land"; and "in a new land" was his hasty addition, as "with an old friend" was mine. The others could hardly believe that Kent and I had written independently, and just on the impulse of the moment; it seemed impossible that we had not planned our answers together. I thought Kent would be pleased that I had remembered him — of course he is the only old friend I have in this new land —

but he said: "The old friend was quite an afterthought, wasn't he?" Don Roberto glowered at us both. His answer to the question was — "Success in what I undertake." Mrs. Martin wrote, "That everyone else may be as happy as I am;" and Mr. Martin — "To have plenty of work that I like to do, and to be well paid for it." "That is not original," he confessed; "but I happened to think of it, so I put it down."

December 15th.

REALLY, Thanksgiving day was the beginning of the dry season: we have not had a drop of rain for over two weeks. The weather is so perfect that it seems unreal — artificial — like wax apples or peaches — and so lovely that no one can understand how lovely it is who has not lived through its days. Once in a while, at home, there come twelve hours — in June, perhaps, or early September — at the end of which we say (with a sigh of regret that it is gone), "This has been a perfect day!" Here in the Sierra Nevadas we are having weeks of such days. It is not hot; it is not cold; the sun shines softly, and a delicious little breeze blows steadily; — one might almost say "flows," for the warm, sweet air is like a current of clear water, rippling against the hours as they go by. Mr. and Mrs. Martin say that though they have been here ten years, they do not yet take the weather at this season as a matter of course; each

December it comes as a beautiful surprise. This is the time when the roses are at their best — such a wonderful best! — the "American Beauty" and "La France" are higher than the house and covered with blossoms. We see great, gorgeous butterflies, now, and all out-of-doors is full of birds, from the tiny yellow ones, to the parrots that scream far over our heads. Only the dearth of angels keeps the country from being a paradise.

Kent has returned to Santa Marta, but he is coming up again for Christmas. We are going to have a house party, and even now preparations for it are going forward busily. The carpenters are making furniture — beds, a side-board, dining-room table and chairs, a couch, book shelves — all in a modified Mission style, of native cedar wood. Mr. Martin is putting up ceilings of very, very heavy greyish blue, or old-rose paper, divided into great squares by cedar strips — quite the prettiest things of the kind I ever saw — and the side walls of the rooms have been covered with plain paper to harmonize with the ceilings. Mrs. Martin and I have painted the chimney place a fine, homelike

dark red, and we have had a carpenter make mantel shelves of cedar, like the other woodwork.

In the midst of all this the coffee picking and drying are still going on, though now the harvest is drawing towards its close. It is a busy, busy life, that of a coffee grower, especially during the first five years of the plantation, but it is a life in which the work of every day and every month shows for itself — " something accomplished, something done; " and I should think that a man who has made a coffee estate must have a great sense of satisfaction as he looks over the finished result of his labor. It seems to me that no work that is done in cities can compare with it.

December 24th.

Mrs. Martin and I have made a hurried trip to Santa Marta; we returned day before yesterday, and Kent came up with us. The others of the holiday party are to arrive to-morrow morning.

We went down to do some Christmas shopping, but though our little coast town is not now the centre of the war area as it

was some weeks ago, the banana boats have so recently begun to visit it again that there is scarcely anything in the shops. We were down only one day, but that was more than enough thorougly to explore the "shopping district." We took what we could find and rode gladly away to the cool again. Yesterday the *arrieros* and the cargo mules came up, and the air was full of mystery and excitement as the mules were unloaded at the store, and parcels were hurriedly secreted from the children's eyes.

Kent went about with us in Santa Marta, and as we walked through the heat, along the narrow, sandy streets, visiting one little queer, tropical shop after another, the very contrast in the surroundings seemed to carry the American's thoughts across the sea, so that he talked of nothing but the life in New York at this holiday season.

"Think of Broadway, now — three days before Christmas," he kept saying, perversely. "Think of Twenty-third Street — or Fifth Avenue, or Madison Square at five o'clock on a winter afternoon, with the electric lights blazing all over everything. See the Christmas crowds with their parcels; smell the

trees and the greens, on the sidewalks; look at the stands, and the cartloads of holly and mistletoe! Don't you wish you were there?"

I really do not, but I am glad that someone from home — someone who understands — is here with me at this time. I suppose Don Roberto had real Christmases in England; he certainly never would have known one if he had remained in Bogota. I was there a year ago, and a more homesick atmosphere I can not imagine.

Here at El Cafetal every nook and cranny is pervaded by the Christmas Spirit, invoked, made welcome and compassed about by La Niña Eva. When there is no butter, some women say, "I am so sorry, but we can not have any cake." Mrs. Martin says nothing at all, but makes a cake with lard. Then she surrounds the feast with such sweet gayety that no one thinks much of what is on the board — one only realises, vaguely, that there is plenty of cake, and that it is a very pleasant thing to be sitting there and eating it. With almost nothing to work with, La Niña Eva has prepared a Christmas for all the men, women and children on the plantation, over one hundred in all, besides hav-

ing made presents for the children of her own family. The people of the *finca* are to have dresses, or aprons, or coats, or dolls, or money, or just bags of sweets and peanuts, according to the length of time they have been here. (Making out a list of the people and deciding what to give them took Mr. and Mrs. Martin a whole evening.) All the bags have had to be sewed, filled and tied up; all the dolls cut out, stuffed and dressed; the *dulce* Mrs. Martin has made, and the peanuts she has roasted. A carpenter, under Mrs. Martin's direction, has made a little bureau, a doll's wardrobe, a bed and some tiny chairs; and La Niña Eva, personally, has constructed a wooden horse, and so covered it with felt that no other wooden horse ever looked so real. A butter tub has been converted into a doll's wash tub, and a home-made wash-board goes with it; white rabbits the wonderful woman has evolved fron Canton flannel; balls, of striped red and white cheese cloth; candle holders for the tree out of odds and ends of wire. It will be seen how very little we were able to buy in Santa Marta; — in fact, only raisins, nuts, candles, some cotton dress goods, a few dates,

and half a dozen Chinese lanterns. I have made cream date candy, but as we have only loaf sugar, which has to be pounded in an old Indian stone mortar, the "cream" is decidedly gritty.

Early this morning, *mozos* went off into the forest and brought back quantities of palms, some with roots, and some cut off above the ground; and this afternoon we have all been decorating the corridor. We have a row of great tubs, filled with earth, all along the edge of the corridor, and into these we have put the rooted plants — palms eight feet high, with great fan leaves that meet above our heads. In the spaces between the tubs, hanging down from the roof of the corridor, are wire baskets (Mrs. Martin made them) filled with moss and ferns. The cut palms we have stacked in great bunches in corners, and arranged in an arch over the doorway; and some will be used to decorate the *sala,* to-morrow morning.

The tree has been cut, and is now being put up in its place at the end of the *sala.* El Cafetal is not high enough above the sea to be in the fir belt, so we have no fragrant, spicy greens, no holly, no mistletoe, no proper

Christmas tree. Surely Santa Claus will be surprised, to-night, when he comes down the chimney by way of the fireplace in the *sala,* and finds — a coffee tree. Yet, really, aside from the associations that one has with the evergreen family at this time, the coffee tree is particularly pretty for the purpose. Ours is about nine feet high, perfectly symmetrical, with waxy, dark green leaves, and it is full of red, cherry-like berries. To-morrow, the *sala* will be closed to the children, and we shall trim the tree and put the presents on it.

Don Roberto has been here all day, helping us. We went down to my garden, he and I, this afternoon, and gathered for to-morrow's dinner two baskets' full of vegetables — tomatoes, beets, peas, cucumbers and lettuce. As we worked there with each other, pulling from the soil, and picking from the vines, I someway felt that we were a little closer together, a little nearer in heart and sympathy, than we had ever been before.

December 28th.

I went to sleep Christmas Eve thinking of Don Roberto, and I suppose it is not unnatural that I should have dreamed of him.

Yet such a dream! I thought that I had been married to him, but by proxy, so that I had not yet seen my husband. Then, I was aware that he had come; that he was waiting in another room, and that I must go to him. I went, calmly, without any emotion whatever, but when I was in the room, and saw him standing there, I instantly felt that I did not love him. My heart sank, as the thought surged over me, "I am married to this man. There is no escape —until death.— And I do not love him!" The utter hopelessness of it took possession of me. "It is done," I thought. "And it is forever." Still, I walked across the room to meet him, as he came towards me with outstretched hand. I laid my hand in his, thinking, as I did so, "I am his wife; it is his right." As he took my hand, he drew me to him, looking, meanwhile, gravely down into my face; then, drawing nearer still, he stooped and kissed me on the lips. Slowly I lifted my face and our eyes met. Suddenly, my head was on his breast, and he was holding me closely, so closely that I could feel his heart beating hard and fast. And in that moment I knew that I did love him — I

really did. But it was not for himself — it was because of that kiss.

"Hazardous!" I was saying to myself as I awoke; "very hazardous!" What is hazardous, I wonder. To love? To kiss? Or to love because of a kiss? Yes; that might be. And that reminds me of the disagreeable Englishman's question: "Don't you think, really now, that international marriages are hazardous?"

Don Roberto was here on Christmas morning by coffee time — about seven. He brought me a most gorgeous scarf, made by the Indians of Pueblo Viejo.

As soon as we had had coffee, the people of the *finca* gathered in the *patio,* outside of the dining-room, and their presents were distributed to them. Besides the substantial gifts — the dresses and coats and things that I have mentioned — every man, woman and child had a hot biscuit and a cooky — made by La Niña Eva. Then we sent away the children and began to trim the tree and decorate the *sala.* We used quantities and quantities of palms and roses, and when we had finished, the room was lovely, but not in the least like Christmas — rather, it resembled

the chancel at a June wedding. The six Chinese lanterns we hung among the palms, to be lighted in the evening, with the candles on the tree.

Almost by the time the *sala* was finished, our guests began to arrive — from the other plantations, first, and later, from Santa Marta. We had almost the Thanksgiving-wedding party, but we greatly missed Baby and Harry Hunter — they are already settled on their tidy little place in Surrey. About three o'clock we began the Christmas dinner, and by the time we had finished, the sun was setting. As soon as it grew dark, the lanterns and the candles were lighted, the *sala* doors were thrown open, and Clara cried, ecstatically, *"Ya esta el tree!"* (The tree is!) It was the children's hour, but the Olympians were not forgotten. Among other things which came to me was the most beautiful hammock I ever saw — all of pure white cord and fringe. Kent had seen it at Maranguey, one of the Magdalena river towns, and had brought it down for me.

On Christmas night the plantation people had one of their native dances, which they call *cumbiambas,* and which must be a survi-

val from far-off savage days — Indian or negro, I do not know, but I should think the latter. The dance is in the open air, on some flat space, in the centre of which is a tall pole, surmounted by a lantern. Men and women, down to young boys and girls — there were seventy or eighty of them the other night — each with a lighted candle in his hand, go in couples in a large circle around the pole, moving forward, constantly, with a queer, shuffling, dancing step. Inside the circle, one beats continuously on an enormous native drum — tap, tap, tap, never stopping for an instant, and that is the only music (?) there is. The gleam of the lantern on top of the pole, throws just enough light to bring out fantastic shadows, swaying and circling; while the candles — glimmering points that swerve and veer through the surrounding darkness —illuminate the swarthy faces of the dancers. Around and around the pole they circle, untiringly, the couples changing at short intervals, as a man or a woman advances or falls back; and hour after hour this strange, barbaric performance is continued. I should like very much to know if the *cumbiamba* is a great-grandfather of the dance around a May pole.

We all went out and watched the dance, standing, ourselves, away from the circle, far back in the shadow. Over our heads the tropic stars were burning — the Cross, and the dipper upside down. I felt a million miles from home, but I was not homesick; rather, I was filled with keenest pleasure in what was going on around me. I moved away a short distance, better to observe the scene — the little group of Caucasians, laughing and talking in the foreground, and the throng of dancing red men and negroes, beyond — and then I stood there, wondering how it is possible that there are so many people in the world who do not feel the joy of travel. I thought of friends, at home, who could as well as not have been there with me, but who, in all probability, were wondering, on their part, how I could want to be so far away. I was in a mood to be in sympathy with all things alien and foreign, when Don Roberto joined me.

"I've been trying all day for a word alone with you," he began at once, hurriedly — "and now it will be only an instant. You know what I want to say. You know I love you. I've loved you from the beginning —

from the day at the fire. I'd have said so long ago if you'd been a Colombian, but you English — Americans — it makes no difference — you don't understand; you wouldn't have believed me. So I've waited — six months. Now tell me — quickly — they're going back to the house — do you care for me at all?"

"Come, Miss Parnell," called Mr. Anson. "Come, Alvarez! We're going in, to dance."

"Tell me!" Don Roberto insisted, even as we turned to join the others. "Just that — do you care for me?"

If we had had five seconds longer, I am almost certain that I should have said, "Yes; I do." But there was not even an instant, and I am very glad, now, that it was so. For I am not at all sure that I love Don Roberto, and I am still less certain that I am willing to marry him, even if I do love him. There are loves and loves, and I do not know, yet, that either his or mine is the kind that ought to end in marriage. "Matrimony — is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God."

We have talked this all over, since Christmas night. Don Roberto does not understand in the least. I think he wishes that I were a Colombian. A little walking under a balcony; an introduction to the home; a few calls in the presence of the chaperone; a formal request for the girl's hand — and all is arranged. As for the future of the couple — *Quien sabe?*

January 20th.

No rain for eight weeks, and my garden is commencing to suffer. Seeds that I planted two weeks ago have not come up, and those vegetables — as beets, cabbages, onions and cauliflowers — that were in fine condition at the beginning of the dry season, are now drooping and looking thirsty. The only things that are doing well are the tomatoes; the constant sunshine is good for them, and the plants are laden and bowed down with fruit. The gardens are too far from any spring to be watered artificially, so La Niña Eva and I are now planting our seeds in what we call here a "*troje*" — that is, a seed-bed made in a very large wooden frame or box — raised above the ground to be out of the way of the chickens. We have our

"*trojes*" just back of the house, by the *chorro* — the jet of water from a spring in the hills — so we can easily see to it that the little plants are thoroughly soaked every day. By the time the rainy season begins again, the seedlings will have become large enough to be transplanted into the garden beds. It is now that Mr. Martin's prediction that I should be eaten alive by *plaga* is coming to pass; the hot sun brings out the pests in myriads. They do not bother us at all up by the house, but down in my garden they nearly drive me frantic. Fortunately they keep very near the ground, so that it is only when I stoop low to do some weeding, or bend over to pull up some vegetables, that they are really unbearable. I work for a minute or two, then straighten up and flap my handkerchief vigorously, dispersing the swarms for the instant. Then I weed a little more. "I won't stop till I get to the middle of the bed," I tell myself. But back come all the gnats, bringing their friends with them, and there are days when they are so very, very bad that I just give up and flee to the house.

I begin to feel quite like an *arriera* — I hope *arriera* is feminine for *arriero,* but I am

not at all sure. Whatever it is, I feel like one, because I have "been down" so often of late.

This time it was to hunt the sportive alligator. Mr. Cunningham sent up to know if we would go for two days in the "Caimanero" and we wrote back that indeed we would.

The "Caimanero" is the tiniest of steam launches, and there was room for only Mr. and Mrs. Martin, Mr. Cunningham and me, besides the engineer, and a man who skins the alligators. We left Santa Marta early Wednesday morning, and returned Thursday afternoon, so we had nearly two days in the *caños,* which are very like the St. John's River, in Florida. We steamed about, here and there, in creeks so winding and narrow that often there was scarcely space for our little boat to turn, and in many places the trees almost met overhead; out onto broad water where the tide comes in from the sea and forms lagoons; by little islands covered with tropical thicket and matted vines, and through sinuous channels of the open everglade or *cienaga.* Alligators swarmed the water, and crawled out to lie on the banks; we shot at them, but none of

us, except Mr. Cunningham and his men succeeded in killing one.

Late Wednesday afternoon we were near Pueblo Viejo, the most aboriginal Indian village that I have seen, except on the Magdalena. Some of the huts are built on piles over low flats, out from the mainland; the surface is flooded at high tide, and then the aspect of the place is so primeval that one seems almost to be gazing on the lake dwellings of prehistoric times. The launch reached the village just at the end of the day. Indians were going and coming over the water in canoes of great hollowed logs; inside the palm huts women were cooking over little fires between stones on the mud floor; naked children ran about, and gathered to watch us as we approached, and the whole scene was saturated with the colored light of a tropic sunset.

In this latitude, the twilight fades exactly as it does in a theatre. No sooner has the sun gone below the horizon than the darkness begins to fall in visible shades, deeper every second, just as it does on the stage when the lights are extinguished in rapid succession, to indicate the coming on of night.

We slept on board the "Caimanero"—Mrs. Martin and I in the little cabin, the men in hammocks on the deck. Just before daybreak I awoke, and getting up softly, I went to the tiny window and looked out. Everything was very still, except for just a whisper of wind, heralding the dawn, and now and then a little splash, as an alligator moved through the water near the side of the boat. The Indian village was yet asleep; I looked over towards it, and wondered as to the nature of the dreams of a prehistoric lake dweller. Above us, the stars were already beginning to wink out, and, near the southern horizon, the Cross had "swung low to the morn." I waited by the window until the first pink light came into the sky, and the pueblo commenced to stir in its sleep. Presently an Indian boy came out from a hut, went to the water, and taking one of the smaller canoes, paddled a little distance away; in a moment or two I saw that he was catching fish. By this time the world was growing wide awake, and before long we were all out of doors, and Mr. Cunningham was buying the Indian's fish for an American breakfast. A little later, before steaming off into the

caños again, we walked through a grove of cocoanut palms — one of the most beautiful and majestic things in all nature. I must admit, however, that one's thoughts are somewhat distracted from the cathedral solemnity of such a spot by the enormous land crabs that go rattling about almost under one's feet, trying to scuttle out of sight into their holes in the ground.

When we came back to El Cafetal, after the alligator hunt, Mr. and Mrs. Anson, and Kent accompanied us, and a day or two later we all, with Don Roberto, went off on a camping party, over some land that Kent has decided to buy. The tract is just beyond El Cafetal, not far away, as the crow flies, but very difficult to penetrate, on account of the dense forest. We took with us men with machetes to cut away the undergrowth, and more men to carry our blankets and food.

"Why are you providing such quantities of provisions?" I said to Mr. Martin. "I should think you were preparing for a trip to Central Africa."

"Think of all the *mozos* who are going with us," he returned; "there must be something for them to eat, you know."

"Why do you take so many men?" I persisted. "I don't see why you need so many."

"But just look at all the food there is to be carried," explained Mr. Martin.

We rode mules as far as the edge of our own clearings; then we began slowly to make our way on foot. The hills in this section are a network of paved Indian roads, but so many years have passed since these were laid down, that the forest has grown over them, and the pavement is, to a great extent, covered with vegetation. In the middle of many of the roads there are growing trees of four or five feet in diameter, unimpeachable witnesses to the hundreds of years that have gone by since the last red man passed that way. A great part of the trail from Santa Marta up to El Cafetal is one of the old Indian roads reopened, and every time we come up we ride for some distance over the original stone pavement. The same route goes on, past our estate, across the valley and over the ridge into the valley of the Rio Cordova, and it was by this way that we entered the forest and began our climb up the slope. The men with the machetes went first, cutting and slashing at vines, hanging roots, and what

we call "*monte*"— low, thick vegetation — and as far as possible clearing the path; but even then our progress was exceedingly slow and difficult. I conceived that we were a company of the early Spanish explorers, driving these Indians before us, urging them ever on and on, in our mad, insatiable desire to find gold. Each morning we began the march, certain that before nightfall we should come upon El Dorado, and each evening we were forced to accept, bitterly, another day's disappointment. But always we pushed on, further and further into the interior, week after week, and month after month, leaving the coast and the Sierra Nevadas far behind us, until at last, having crossed the Andes, we came out on a plateau nearly nine thousand feet above the sea, and there we built the city of Santa Fe de Bogota.

Having thus founded the capital of Colombia, I returned to these mountains, and now I tried to imagine all this forest gone, the Indian roads open, and the red men going back and forth over the country. Here I had no history or records to guide me, and I was at once lost in a maze of uncertainty and conjecture. I can not understand, for in-

stance, what need those Indians had of such broad, well-made thoroughfares. Why were not ordinary, narrow trails sufficient? These roads of theirs were so good that they were like military roads, if one considers their quality with reference to the quality of the Indian civilisation. By this I mean that as the military roads of Germany, for example, are to the German civilisation, so these roads of the Sierra Nevadas were to what we suppose to have been the civilisation of the primitive Indian of this region. And that is to say that the highways of the Indian were far better in proportion to his status among the world's people than are the highways of our country to the status of the United States. The Indians of those times must have been very different from any Colombian Indians of to-day. These have no mode of life that calls for well-made lines of travel, in the first place, and they have no quality of character that would induce so much labor, even if good thoroughfares would be an advantage to them. People who do not keep even their own homes in right condition, or who will not take the trouble to plant a little garden about their *ranchos,* when the ground and the seeds are

freely offered to them — would certainly stand aghast at any notion of road-building.

The first night in the forest we slept very comfortably in our blankets, for we were not yet high enough to feel much wind, and the great camp fire kept us sufficiently warm; but the second night, when we bivouacked within sight of the snow-line, the wind blew howlingly, and the blankets seemed to be made of cobwebs. It was hard to believe that twenty miles — five hours — away, people were sweltering, with electric fans whirring at the bedsides of those who were lucky enough to have them. It is a very simple matter, in this region, to change one's climate, yet I remember that a woman in Bogota once said to me, rather enviously, "You of the north have not to travel about for a change of temperature: you can stay in one place, and heat and cold, in succession, come to your own homes!"

The woman had never been further from Bogota than Villete, and could have no conception of a New Yorker's constant flitting from Palm Beach to an Adirondack camp, from Tuxedo to Los Angeles, from Newport to the Riviera. Her idea, however, had

struck me as being a grandly simple and majestic one: — the notion that a human being might abide, calmly and tranquilly, like a god, while, for his comfort, the ever-changing seasons swept by untiringly.

We were two nights and nearly three days on our little expedition, but the first day was mainly a going forth, and the third day a returning, so it happened that into the second day were crowded most of the incidents and adventures. It was early on that morning that, as I was stumbling along, of a sudden at least a pint of cold water was poured upon me from above, and as the icy stream ran down my back, I was aware that I had inadvertently tipped over a water plant. The thing looks rather like a cabbage, and it grows like an orchid on the trunks and branches of trees. To the natives it is a natural water jar from which they drink when they are thirsty in the woods.

Next — to his inexpressible pride and delight, Kent shot a tapir. All along one of the slopes to the east of the valley there is a beaten track, worn and kept open by the passing and repassing of tapirs, of which there are so many there that the situation is

called *Danta* (tapir) Ridge. Once or twice, in the night, we had heard their shrill, whistling cry, and as we had gone over their trail we had observed a great many traces of the animals — their tracks, especially the nest-like beds which they make in the grass; but we knew that, numerous though they are, they are almost never encountered, so we had had no idea of seeing one. It happened, however, that as we were making our way along a bit of comparatively open road, a great, dark form crossed the path directly in front of us, and in the few seconds that the animal was before him Kent shot it. I had learned that the tapir is between the elephant and the pig in the zoölogical family, and someway I had fancied that it was about the size of a wild boar; I was very much surprised, therefore, to find that tapirs are nearly as large as mules. The men with us said it was fortunate that Kent had killed the animal rather than only wounded it, as, though the tapir avoids mankind as far as possible, it is dangerous when it is brought to bay.

So, that second day, we kept on, still over the route of the old Indian road from Santa Marta; now for some distance along a clear

piece of pavement, and then through such undergrowth that in an hour we had advanced scarcely two hundred feet, and without the machetes any progress would have been impossible. We climbed and scrambled and made our difficult way, and we were getting well tired when we came upon some discoveries that at once rendered our fatigue as if it had never been.

Unknowingly we had accomplished a pilgrimage; for, of a sudden, there before us, exactly in the course of the road over which we were going, stood an altar. I am not sure how the others felt about it, but I was not in the least surprised. Of course I had not been aware of the altar's existence, and I could not have expected to see anything of the kind; but when it was before me, it seemed so entirely natural and fitting that it should be there that it was almost with a sense of recognition that I approached it. Here, then, was one purpose, at least, for which the long, well-paved road had been made — to lead up to the red men's sanctuary. Oh, to go back, if only for one hour, to the time when this place was the scene of religious ceremonials! To be able to see the Indians coming up from

the valleys to worship here; to know the manner of their service, and what were the sacrifices that they offered. Their altar is of stone; it is five feet high; the sides converge a little towards the flat top, which is five feet square. On this surface, back of the centre, is a flat stone, two feet square, and fifteen inches high. On two sides of the altar are steps laid up with stone, and the paved road leads directly up these steps on one side, and down the steps on the other side. Then the road goes on, over the ridge, down into the next valley, and I do not know how much further.

At that point we left the route which we had followed ever since starting from El Cafetal, and instead of going on over what I call the Santa Marta Indian Road, we turned south, keeping along the ridge between the two valleys. After a time we fell in with another of the old paved ways; this crossed the ridge at right angles, and going down into the valley of the Rio Cordova, joined the Santa Marta route. Branching off from this second road was a third, and just at the intersection of these two we came upon a stone anchor. After the discovery of the altar, I think we

had all been in rather an expectant frame of mind, and that no one felt that it was any more than he had been looking for when we found another material reminder of the life of the Indian of centuries ago. The anchor was made in two parts — the shank, which is nine feet long, and the curved arms which are ten feet from point to point; between these sections runs the Indian road. Why the anchor is there; for what purpose it was made; what it means, and why the road runs through it, rather than around it, are questions that one can only ask and never answer.

If the altar be taken to symbolise faith, and the anchor hope, we might very reasonably have looked for a heart as the next form of Indian remains; but the old braves either had no charity to typify, or they thought a heart of stone too obvious an inconsistency, for the last traces of them that we met — on the branch road, further along the ridge — were a stone seat, about fifteen inches square, and a large clay jar. The latter is almost intact, and has on one side a grotesque face, with two hands holding something to the mouth — the whole probably intended to represent a person in the act of

drinking. Kent claimed the jar as having been found near the land that he is going to purchase. He had it taken with great care back to El Cafetal, and then he gave it to me.

It is said that really to know a person one must travel with him. That is true — I have tried it. On a long journey people either grow very near to one another or else they quarrel. Now, as ordinary travelling is to the stay-at-home conditions of life, so is a camping party to ordinary travelling. As a month of travel equals a year at home, so a day of camping equals a month of travel. Stay-at-homes know one another about as they care to know and be known; travellers know, whether they care or not; and campers more than know — they feel. There is something about the forest that seems to reduce a person to his lowest terms; to show him exactly as he is, without veneer of any kind. The free, unconventional life loosens restraints, and the true man is discovered. The character thus revealed may be higher or lower than that which has hitherto appeared, but at least it is the real nature.

I really do not know much more about Don

Roberto than I was aware of before we went into the woods, yet I certainly feel less in sympathy with him than I did a week ago. I try to find the reason for this, and I review every word and action of his during the three days' trip; but I can think of only one small thing that may explain the alienation. A moth was flying about his face; it annoyed him; he caught it by one wing and held it over the fire until it was burned to death. That is all; yet I feel, now, that if I married Don Roberto I should never want to be far away from a United States Consul, to whom I could appeal in case of need — in case I should at any time want to go home. The impression is absurd — irrational; there has been no adequate cause for it. It may wear off, and I hope it will — I want to be able to care for him.

February 27th.
Ash Wednesday.

Hardly were the Christmas festivities over when the people of the *finca* began to enact the mummeries of the carnival season. For weeks, now, the children and the house servants have been getting themselves up in fantastic garbs, and carrying about with them

bottles filled with colored water which they have been throwing all over one another's clothes. In this part of the world the colored water takes the place of the flowers and confetti of New Orleans and southern Europe; and the more popular one is, here, the greater the quantity of tinted liquid is poured on one's garments. If a señorita is pretty, the young men all dash their colored water at her, and the girl whose white gown is the most stained is the belle of the carnival. The great day of the season is Carnival Sunday — the Sunday before Lent — but for two or three weeks previous to that time, and on Monday and Tuesday, right up to Ash Wednesday, the fun and frolic are going on. In Barranquilla and Santa Marta there have been processions in the streets, and every night balls have been given. Towards the last — that is, on Sunday and Monday and Tuesday — the people gave themselves up wholly to gaiety and revels. No business was thought of; the shops were closed; the streets were thronged; all the young people dressed in fancy costumes; the men went around from house to house, some on foot, some in carriages; the young girls peeped coyly out from

behind shutters, or window bars, or half-closed doors; and at every sight of them the gallants threw the colored water from the bottles.

Here on the plantation, as I have said, the children and the servants have been making merry for weeks past; and for three days the place looked as if Elf-land had broken loose over it, as the masqueraders ran about, chasing one another with shrieks of laughter, and throwing colored water by the quart. Sunday evening the people had a dance in one of the *ranchos,* and Kent and I went for a while to look on. In the one room of the hut glimmered three candles, dimly lighting the centre, and leaving the corners in darkness. After the dancing began, the air was thick with dust from the earth floor, so that we saw the men and women in a haze, moving through their strange steps and figures, and throwing quaint shadows on the mud walls. The big drum of the *cumbiamba* was beaten continuously by an Indian just without the door of the *rancho,* while a boy rattled what they call a *chucho* — a long, hollow gourd, with beans or shot that clatter around inside when the thing is shaken. Kent and I

watched the scene for only a half hour or so, but the people kept on dancing till long after midnight — in fact, when I woke up about two o'clock in the morning, I heard the big drum still sounding.

Don Roberto went over to Barranquilla for the Carnival week. He tried to persuade Mrs. Martin and me to go, too, but neither of us cared anything about it, and he went alone. He says he has been over every year since he came from England: I suppose it is to him what the Fourth of July, for instance, is to us, except that there is nothing patriotic about it. It would be difficult, I should think, for a Colombian to have any feeling of patriotism; yet it is the lack of it that is the curse of the land. Not long ago Kent quoted Stephen Decatur's toast, given at Norfolk in 1816: —

"Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations, may she always be in the right; but right or wrong — our country!"

Don Roberto said, frankly, that that was a sentiment he could not in the least understand.

"I can't fancy myself enthusing over any country just because I happened to be born in

it," he declared. "If it's good I don't mind standing by it, but if it's bad, as this one is, it can go to the dogs for all I care. As soon as I've made money enough here, I'm going to leave it, anyway." But after a moment he added —"I believe, though, it's that 'right or wrong' policy that has made England what it is."

He came back, yesterday, from Barranquilla, very much a Colombian, socially, if not politically. He went to a ball every night while he was in the town, and he drove about all day in a carriage with three other young men, throwing colored water and thoroughly enjoying himself. He protests that he was wishing all the time that I was there; but I wonder what he would have done if I had been. I know what I would *not* have done!

Kent has come to stay here at El Cafetal for some weeks while he supervises the work which has already begun on his land, up the valley. Both he and Mr. Martin have gangs of *mozos* felling trees by the acre; and some of our men are "tumbling (as they call it here) so near the house that we can see the great trunks sway and fall, and hear the crash as they come to the ground. After the

trees are cut down, and have lain for a while in the unbroken sunshine of the dry season, they are set on fire, and the tracts of land are "burned over." For days and days together the air is full of smoke, and there is a pleasant smell of burning wood; after the night falls we see wide spaces of the darkness swept by flames, and the light of them goes up to the stars. I remember about a year ago, when I had first come to Santa Marta, and was just beginning to know of the coffee plantations in the higher lands, I stood, one evening, out on the balcony of the hotel, looking up towards the Sierra Nevadas. As it grew dark, a bright light showed on the mountain side, and afterwards, for hours, I watched a fire on some plantation — perhaps it was El Cafetal. These conflagrations go on until at last they burn themselves out, and there remain only charred stumps, and a thick layer of ashes over the ground. Then the land lies open and empty; what was once the theatre of the human affairs of the red man is now ready for those of his pale-face successor. It is a grand thing, I think — this working directly with nature, face to face; clearing away the forest; letting in the sun;

planting the coffee trees; making an estate. It seems so much finer to be at this end of the venture than at the market end.

The coffee harvest is all over for this year; the last berries have been picked; the last beans have been dried, and all the bags, each containing one hundred pounds, have gone on the mules down to Santa Marta, and thence abroad.

The revolution really seems to have come to an end at last — to have collapsed as unexpectedly as it began, three years ago. It is said that Señor Reyes is coming back from Europe, and optimistic ones are full of hope that in that statesman, general and explorer all parties are going to unite, and that Colombia is now to be a land of peace and concord, with everybody holding hands, and no one caring who holds the key of the treasury. That is the preferred and popular sentiment at the moment, but in the midst of this general enthusiasm there are yet some discerning persons who hold that another conflict is very near. Indeed, it is a matter of wonderment to us of the coast that Bogota does not seem to hear the very distinct rumblings of thunder that are coming from the Department of Pan-

ama. What are they thinking of, up there at the capital, that they continue to bluff, and to evade, and to act as they are acting in regard to the canal treaty? Do they suppose that, even if the United States submits to the insolence of such treatment — (at least it would be insolence if Colombia were a responsible power instead of the spoiled-child government that it is) — do they imagine for one moment that Panama is going to be quiet if there is no ratification of some favorable canal treaty? The most phlegmatic people in the world would not accept calmly such a blow to their well-being, and still less will Panama do so — Panama with revolution in her very blood. That Department is saying, now, openly, that if there be no canal treaty it will secede from the Republic of Colombia; and yet the Congress at Bogota goes blindly on with its policy of postponement and probable rejection.

One of the last acts of the war in this coast region was the seizing of the little "Caimanero" of our alligator hunt, and the cutting off of the engineer's head with a machete, right before his family's eyes. It happened a month ago, but we have just heard of

it. Though it is no worse than hundreds of other acts of the revolution, it seems more appalling to us because we knew the engineer, and had so lately taken that trip through the *caños* with him.

March 10th.

It is very, very dry in these days — so dry that the world is parched and seared, and a thick white dust has settled over everything. It is terribly hard on the gardens; I am so sorry for them, and I would do anything to give them the water they are begging for. The dry season is heavenly when it first comes, but, now, after three months of sun, it is going to be heavenly to have the rain fall again. "I am sick of endless sunshine," I believe, just as Mr. Kipling was, when he longed for "the spring in the English lanes."

My tomatoes are receiving a great deal of praise and admiration just now, simply because they love the dry season, and thrive in it. The commendation is manifestly unjust, as the tomatoes deserve no credit at all for doing exactly what they like to do, and being prosperous and happy in the midst of circumstances that literally suit them down to the

ground. "Be good and you will be happy" is very well, and very true; but the other way around is true, also: Be happy; and if you are not good there is no excuse for you.

"Yes," says Kent; "but some people who ought to be good, because they have so much to make them happy, are yet selfish and unprofitable; and some people are never happy, no matter how much they have." (Here he reminds me of two or three persons whom we both know, at home, who really possess everything that any one could reasonably wish for, but who are constantly fretting.)

—"If I were you," he advises me, "I wouldn't be so cynical and captious in regard to those tomatoes, for at least they know when they are well off."

This is quite true, now that I think of it; and the tomatoes certainly merit approbation, in that, at least, they appreciate their blessings, and are making the most of their advantages. For this I can consistently be grateful to them, and so I am, the while I gather the fruits of their well-doing, to the extent of several large baskets of tomatoes, every week.

I had hardly supposed that the world held as many little yellow butterflies as there are

winging their way by us just at this time. I do not know why they are migrating like this; perhaps it is to escape the approaching rainy season. The air is full of them; for days they have been drifting past the house, in fluttering, corn-coloured clouds, millions and millions of them, so light and pretty and dainty and gay — little Psyches, hurrying to meet the Cupids who seem to be calling to them from somewhere in the north.

April 2nd.

It is the greatest mistake to suppose that there is no spring in the tropics. It is true that there is no winter — that frost never comes, and snow never falls, and the trees are never bare and leafless. But as for spring — it is with us and about us, below us and above us; the earth knows, even here, when it is spring-time, and the sky knows it, and we know it because they do. Five days ago the clouds began to gather — little pearl-grey things, so light and filmy and translucent that they seemed no more than shadows, yet were really and truly clouds. They passed over the sun, overcasting it for just a moment or two, then they vanished, leaving

the world all brilliant and dazzling as before. But the next day they came again, and were a little heavier and darker, and stayed a little longer, and before they disappeared they had sent down to us the first drops of rain that we had seen since last November. The children and the servants frisked about in the tiny sprinkle, laughing and shouting, and holding out their hands to catch the drops as they fell. I wanted to do the same things, but it would not have been dignified, so I just ran down to my garden and watched the little splashes of water as they hit the dust and made holes in it, but seemed not to be wet enough to moisten it at all. I told all the dry and thirsty cabbages and beets that in just a few days, now, they would have as much water as they wanted, to bathe in, or to drink. I reminded the tomatoes that they had had four months of hot sunshine, and that into each life some rain must fall, so I hoped they were not going to complain; and then I bent low to the earth, and warned the *plaga* that they would better go away from there as fast as they possibly could, as a flood was coming, and if they stayed they would all be drowned.

Each day since then we have had showers, and though, five minutes after they have fallen, the ground is as hard and dry as before, we know, now, that the rainy season has begun, and that in a week or two there will be moisture in abundance. In the meantime I am having my garden beds raked over and prepared for the seeds that I am going to sow in them; and all the ground outside the wire fence is being dug up and made ready for the plants from the *troje*.

For the past week or two I have been feeling just as I do at home when the first spring days come to us. I must have been a bird, once, I think — some kind of migratory bird; — for no sooner is there the first hint of spring in the air than I begin to be restless, and to long to fly away somewhere — no matter where, only away. Then it takes all my little store of common sense to keep me from going to Forty-second Street, and getting on the first limited train that is pulling out; or — still greater temptation — from hurrying down to lower Broadway and engaging a passage on one of the transatlantic steamships. About the middle of April this mood passes off for the time, and with the first warm

days, comes the desire to be in the country. I want, then, to do just what I am doing now — to walk over soft earth and grass instead of city pavements, and to touch with my hands fresh, green, growing things. As Kent, at Christmas time, kept thinking of New York in the Holidays, so I am now calling to mind all the phases of life there in the early spring. It is a gay and pleasant season, and though the thoughts of it are not causing me to be one bit homesick, they are filling me with a sort of home love, and home loyalty that make me glad that I have lived just where I have. It is such a pity, I think, for children to be educated abroad. If a child is taken away when he is five years old, as Don Roberto was, for instance, and if he spends all his childhood in a foreign land, how is he ever really to know and love his own country? No years of living in it, afterwards, can make up for all the memories that he has lost, and all the impressions and influences that he ought to have been absorbing; and I should think he would never be able to feel — whatever he might say —" Right or wrong — my country!"

Don Roberto and I have had a final con-

versation on the subject of our regard for each other, and I think he is as satisfied as I am that there can be nothing more than friendship between us. He came a few days ago and asked me to decide, one way or the other, whether I would marry him or not; and when I said that I was very, very sorry, but that I was sure I never could, I was quite certain that he felt relieved. I fancy that the last three months have shown him, as well as they have shown me, that our ideas of life — our beliefs, traditions, intincts, prejudices — are totally dissimilar; that, because this is true, any fancy that we might have for each other could be only for the moment, and that there is not the slightest foundation for the affection of a lifetime. On my part, the sentiment that, at Christmas time, was so near to being love, has died away; and I truly believe that his feeling has changed just as mine has. His real nature is Colombian, and a woman with an American temperament would, after a while, bore him terribly. I think he began to realise this when he went to the carnival, in Barranquilla. I have felt it, more or less, ever since we spent three days in the woods; and with the coming of spring, and

the thoughts of the homeland that it has brought me, I have become absolutely sure that this international marriage would be hazardous. And now I am not going to think any more about loving anybody, but just devote my time and attention to early vegetables.

To-day our plantation looks as if there had been a fall of snow, over night, and every coffee plant had been powdered with flakes. All the thousands of trees are in bloom, and anything more daintily, exquisitely lovely than the acres and acres of white flowers it would be difficult to imagine. I have never seen Japan in its cherry blossom season, but I refuse to believe that it is any prettier than a coffee plantation in full bloom. By moonlight the effect of snow over the trees is so real that it is startling, and last night when I went out into the cool, pure air, and stood viewing the estate spread out before me, it seemed hardly possible that I was not looking at an early winter landscape in the country, at home. The blossoms are on the trees for only a day or two, but while they last, the place is fairyland.

April 18th.

For the past ten days rain has fallen in refreshing quantities every afternoon; the earth is no longer hard and dry, and the vegetation is green, now, instead of dusty white, or faded brown.

Yesterday, and last night, we entertained a "commission" from Santa Marta — that is, a military force consisting of a captain and twelve men; the officer was our guest, in the house, while the privates bivouacked outside. The squad was sent here to recover rifles said to have been stolen from the government, and the other plantations are being similarly visited. Nearly all of the *mozos* were in the revolution at one time or another, but when they retired to a civilian's life, they "laid down their arms" only figuratively, while literally they one and all retained them for personal and private use. This was done all over the country, so now that the war is over, the government is sending out these "commissions" to gather up the guns wherever they can be found.

The phrase "arms stolen from the government" reminds me of the way in which, when I was in Bogota, both the liberals and

the conservatives used to encourage themselves and their parties by making statements which were exactly alike, but which were presented in such opposite forms that they sounded like contradictory propositions. One day, for instance, I heard a liberal sympathiser say, boastingly, "Soon the government will not have any arms left: the liberals are seizing them in all parts of the country." That very evening a conservative remarked to me —"The liberals are in a bad way: they have no arms at all, except those they have stolen from the government!"

We spent Easter in Santa Marta, going down last Thursday, and coming up again Tuesday — the day before yesterday. Kent did not return with us, as he has gone to Curacao on business, and will be away for two or three weeks. We stayed at the hotel while we were down — the hotel that must once have been a fine old Spanish residence, but in which, at present, one eats in the stable yard; or else the mules, pigs and chickens have their quarters in the dining hall — I have never been able to make out which arrangement it it. The ménage is so purely Colombian that I like to stop at the house, occasionally, for

a bit of native atmosphere and local colour.

During Holy Week, Santa Marta was almost entirely given over to religious observances, scarcely any business being done. The churches were decorated with quantities of lamps, candles and flowers, natural and artificial, much more than they were at Christmas time, and in some of the chancels were platforms or stages on which were represented scenes from the life of Christ. In one was The Temptation on the Mount, with full-sized figures of Christ and the devil; another had the tomb, guarded by Roman soldiers — real men, in Roman armor, who walked, all day long, up and down in front of the sepulchre. We went to the cathedral on both Good Friday and Easter Sunday. On Friday there was no music; the whole interior of the church was heavily draped in black, and at one time all the candles were extinguished and the place was in complete darkness for several minutes. Then a great curtain which hung before the altar was rent in twain, and there were sounds as of thunder, and stones falling one upon another. During part of Saturday the little square in front of the cathedral was thronged with persons gathered to see Judas

hanged in effigy. The stuffed figure was suspended from a rope stretched across the street, just over the heads of the crowd, and it was left there for several hours — without doubt conveying some manner of edification to a people whose sensibilities would hardly be touched by any less material form of teaching.

Monday morning we took the little Santa Marta railroad and went out to spend the day on one of the banana plantations of the United Fruit Company. We had a delightful time, and acres of banana trees are a beautiful and impressive sight — beautiful especially when there is a slight breeze blowing, and all the great leaves are waving to and fro. But Oh! it was so hot, and there were so many mosquitoes! I am very glad to have been there; to have walked under the trees, in the shade of those broad leaves, and to have seen growing thousands upon thousands of bunches of bananas; but for every day in the year, I am happier to be staying on a coffee *finca,* four thousand feet above the sea.

May 15th.

About ten days after we came up from Santa Marta, Willie was taken ill. He had

a bad cold, and a fever that we could not break, and I began, then, to understand what it means to be twenty miles from a doctor. A steamer happened to be in, and its physician came up here, but he could stay only over night, so I suppose it was not his fault that he did not do any good. Willie grew worse instead of better, and the only thing to be done was to take the little fellow to the coast. Two men carried him down in a hammock, and Mr. and Mrs. Martin rode with them — La Niña Eva with Dollie, the baby, in her arms.

They have been gone two weeks, and though Willie is much better, I have no idea when they are coming back, and I am so lonely that if the disagreeable Englishman should come riding up, I think he would be surprised at his welcome. I never realised, before, how large this plantation is, and how far away; and now, for the first time, my attention is drawn to the fact that the servants speak nothing but Spanish. The sun appears to be setting so much earlier than usual, too; before I know it, the daylight fades, and the house begins to grow dark, and though I hurry from room to room, and light the

lamps, there are still shadows in the corners, and the evenings are several hours longer than they were two weeks ago. I seem to be infinite distances from home and from any one that I care for. I wonder how far it is from here to Curacao.

Everything has gone steadily wrong ever since Mr. and Mrs. Martin went away. The cook has been getting married, and has taken up her residence in a *rancho* on top of the hill. It is long, long after the usual time when she comes down to make our coffee in the morning, but the dinner is ready by five o'clock in the afternoon, in order that the bride may go away early enough to prepare the evening repast in her own home. Yesterday, when I called her attention to the eccentricity of her meal hours, she said, "In the morning you tell me I am too late, and in the evening you say I am too early, so how am I to know what you mean?" When I first came up to El Cafetal, and heard Mrs. Martin say, "Well, I am going to despatch the cook," the remark sounded, to my unaccustomed ears, rather ominous. I have since learned that the cook is despatched three times a day, and that the term implies no more than

the giving out of rice, lard, *platanos* and *melanga;* but during the past few days I have earnestly wished that I could carry out the idea in its English, rather than its Colombian signification.

Almost every man, woman and child on the place has taken this occasion to develop some internal disorder, and morning, noon and night they come to me for "*remedios.*" Mrs. Martin keeps a stock of medicines on hand, and that is all very well, for she knows what they are, and when to give them, and how much; but I do *not* know, and such things really ought not to be experimented with. The people come to the door of the *despensa,* and ask for some more of the stuff that La Niña Eva always gives them, out of a blue bottle; but as there are four blue bottles, and I do not feel competent to choose among them, I refuse to give them any *remedio* at all, and then they ask me, very pointedly, how soon I think La Niña Eva is coming back. I do not believe that there is anything very wrong with most of these applicants for medical treatment, but to-day there has been a case that was really serious. The housemaid had an "*ataque,*" and I hope I shall never, never

have to see another one. An *ataque* is a sort of fit, and in this instance it looked like a combination of hydrophobia and lock-jaw. The girl's paroxysms were so violent that four persons could scarcely hold her in the bed. She stiffened herself out so that she could be lifted from the shoulders as if she were a stick of wood; she doubled herself backwards until her head and feet almost met; her eyes protruded; her face was horribly white, though she is an Indian; she foamed at the mouth and her teeth were locked, so that it was impossible to force anything between them. After a while she grew calmer; then she lay and gasped for breath, and it seemed as if she could not live a moment longer. Presently, however, she showed a great desire to sleep, and I thought that would be good for her, but the other women said it would be dangerous to allow it, so they carried her out of doors, and forced her to walk up and down, one supporting her on each side. Gradually she became more like a rational being, and now she is quite sane and quiet. She is very weak, but as her teeth are no longer set, she can receive stimulants and nourishment, and they tell me that by to-

morrow she will be nearly as well as ever.

If El Señor Consul could have warned me that I was going to be left alone with people who were subject to *ataques,* I do not know that I should have had the courage to come; but as it is, even in the midst of these melancholy experiences, I do not regret that I made the experiment. I have been at El Cafetal almost a year, now. I like the life; and I am glad to have lived it, and to have felt for myself the quick, strong heart-beats of a new country. "To be in a new land — with an old friend."— It seems to me that Kent is a long time in Curacao.

May 22d.

Things went on, from bad to worse, until two days ago. Then a *mozo* brought up a note from Mrs. Martin in which she said that Willie was so much better that they had decided that it would not be necessary to stay in Santa Marta any longer, and that they were coming up the next day — yesterday. I was so happy I could have danced for joy, but I only sang, as I flew about the house, making everything ready. The children were as excited as I was, and together we

gathered roses and put them everywhere in the rooms, and made a little fire in the *sala*, that there might not be the least possibility of chill or dampness. Breakfast was ordered for twelve o'clock, as I knew that the travellers would leave Santa Marta very early in order not to be overtaken by the afternoon rains. At half past eleven the table was decorated with flowers; everything was ready, and the children and I, in cleanest and freshest of gowns, began to look down the road for the first moving speck in the distance. But at twelve there was no one in sight — at half past twelve — at one. Alva began to cry, and my heart grew heavier and heavier every instant. At half after one we sat down to breakfast, alone, and how I hated the sight of the flowers!

"Oh, never mind," I said, quite gayly to the children. "They will surely come to-morrow."

"Of course Willie is worse," I told myself, gloomily. "They won't be here, now, for weeks and weeks, and in the meantime the world will probably come to an end."

It had begun to rain soon after twelve, and it poured until five. Then the sun came out

brilliantly, and as the house had been growing emptier and emptier all the afternoon, I felt as if I could not stay in it another minute, and I went down to my garden. The day before, everything there had seemed to be doing finely — all the young plants jumping up in the spring rains, and looking green and prosperous. But, now, I noticed that worms were eating the hearts out of the cabbages; that some one had carelessly stepped on the cucumber vines and broken off two cucumbers, and that all the beds were discouragingly full of weeds. I walked aimlessly about for a while, then I went on, a little beyond the garden, under some banana trees, out of sight of the house and the road. The sun was beginning to go down; I knew with what terrible swiftness it would disappear, once it reached the horizon, and I saw that it was time to go back to the children, and to light the lamps in those lonely, lonely rooms. The rain-drops from the broad banana leaves fell on my head as I made my way up the slope, but as my face was already wet with tears, a little more water made no difference. Just as I was thinking this, I heard hurried steps behind me. I stopped and looked

around; and there, in the light of what had suddenly become the most beautiful sunset I have ever known, stood, as it seemed, an angel; — a wet and very muddy man angel, in riding clothes. As we looked at each other, I suppose he saw my tears, and I saw something in his face that made my heart beat. There was no question asked or answered between us; there seemed to be no need of any. I cried, "Oh, Kent! Kent!" — but then, for several minutes, not another word was spoken.

"But, little one," Kent said, after that interval; "do you realise what you are doing? I've put every cent I have, and more, too, into that land up there, and for the next five years, at least, I've got to stay on it. There will be no Europe —"

The reply that I made to this was, for a governess, a most disgraceful one. If Carmelita had said anything of the kind, I should have pointed out to her, with maps, that the situation was geographically impossible.

"For all I care," was my sweeping assertion, "Europe may be at the bottom of the Red Sea."

It is evident that Kent is not keen about

geography, for he seemed to find this statement in every way satisfactory.

But in a moment or two he remarked, in a regretful tone —" Well, I suppose you'd better go up and see Mrs. Martin."

"*Mrs. Martin!*"

"Certainly."

"Where is she?"

"At the house. They are all there."

"They can't be —"

"But they *are*."

"How did they come? Why didn't they come before?"

"On mules, in the usual way. Because they had to go so slowly, on Willie's account, that they were caught in the rain, and have been in a *rancho,* down the road, all the afternoon, waiting for it to clear up. As soon as it did, they came on."

"But you —?"

"I got to Santa Marta at eleven o'clock this morning, and left there at twelve. I caught up with the Martins about half an hour ago, just as they were leaving the *rancho* below here, and we rode the rest of the way together. When we got here, the children

said you were out somewhere around the garden, and I offered to find you — as I have —

—"Now, shall we go up to the house?"

THE END

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